7:Lewis S-5 (ca. 1940-45) 1948 MD1 Syria MD1

ing all this great quantity of Water was past away, so that in about two Hour's Riding we could hardly perceive that there had been any Rain at all.

That floods are an old phenomenon in Selemiya is suggested by two traditional theories, repeated by the inhabitants today, regarding the derivation of the place name. The first theory makes the essential form Sal-Miah, "a flood of water." The other was recorded by Yaqut in 1225:

> Ahmad ibn Yahyâ ibn Jâbir relates that there was a city in Syria, near Salamiyyah, called Al Mûtafikah [The Overturned], which was overwhelmed with all its inhabitants—all except one hundred souls. These left that place, and came and built one hundred houses, and they called the hamlet where they had made their houses Salâm Miyah (Peace for the Hundred), of which the people made Salamiyyah.[11]

As told today, the story is that the "overwhelming" agent was a flood.

The floods are greatly aggravated by soil erosion. Where the trees have been cut, the bushes torn up for fuel, and the grass overgrazed, and especially where slopes have been plowed, there the soil is eroded, and many slopes are now practically bare of soil and vegetation. In summer, soil is shifted by strong winds; in winter, rain washes it into gullies or wadis with steep, crumbling sides. These are tributary to the main streams which do so much damage when they reach the plain. The runoff from bare slopes is faster and more fully loaded than that from vegetated slopes.

Past and Present Vegetation Destruction

There is no doubt that the trees of Jebel Bil'as are a remnant of a denser and more extensive growth, though there are no very good grounds for the common assumption that all the Palmyrene ranges were forested in Roman days. The Tablet of Palmyra's fiscal laws of A.D. 137[12] gives reason to suppose that the locality may have furnished considerable quantities of wood and pistachio nuts, and in the same period Jebel Bil'as and neighboring ranges were used as grazing lands for sheep and horses.[13] The location of elaborate Romano-Byzantine foggara systems, as at Moufaqqar, directly in the paths of the floods might seem to indicate that, when the foggaras were constructed, floods were not as serious as they are now.

Old stumps and roots are found within and beyond the present wooded

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[11] Le Strange, *op. cit.*, p. 510.

[12] See J.-B. Chabot: Choix d'inscriptions de Palmyre, Paris, 1922, pp. 23-38.

[13] A. Poidebard: La trace de Rome dans le désert de Syrie.—Le limes de Trajan à la conquête arabe.—Recherches aériennes (1925-1932) (Bibliothèque Archéologique et Historique, Vol. 18), Paris, 1934; M. D. Schlumberger: Une campagne de fouilles au Djebel-el-Chaar en 1934. *Comptes Rendus de l'Acad. des Inscriptions et Belles-Lettres*, 1935, pp. 250-256.

14:International Bank S-5 (1954) 1955 MD1 Syria MD1

466 to curb at least the abuse of child labor which exists in most small shops. This might be done by occasional spot checks. One of the difficulties, however, is the inadequacy of the enforcement staff of the Directorate of Labor and Social Affairs in the Ministry of Economics. At the beginning of 1954 there were apparently only eight inspectors assigned to the enforcement of the labor code. We urge that the number be increased and that for this purpose an additional £S 325,000 be made available to the Labor Directorate over the next six years.

The Tourist Industry

457 485 In the discussion of the proposed investment bank, we have already indicated that this institution might assist in financing hotels, as well as manufacturing industries and agriculture. Although this chapter focuses on the problem of developing manufacturing, it appears appropriate to mention here also the possibilities of the tourist industry. Syria has much to interest the tourist from the West. On its soil many civilizations and [172] cultures have flourished and left their imprint. There are countless archaeological sites which are still yielding up treasured relics of the past, numerous ancient Greco-Roman and early Christian cities, fascinating ruined Christian churches and imposing mosques, old Crusader castles and Arab forts. Both Aleppo and Damascus, which vie with each other in the claim to be the oldest continuously inhabited city in the world, intrigue the tourist with their blend of the ancient, the picturesque and the modern.

In the postwar period the airplane has greatly extended the orbit of travel for the American and West European, and rising standards of living have enabled many more to travel abroad than before. In Greece, for example, the number of foreign tourists rose from about 33,000 in 1950 to almost 76,000 in 1953, and the per capita expenditure is said to have doubled during this period. Unfortunately, the mission was unable to obtain figures on the total of foreign travellers visiting Syria, but the number has undoubtedly increased significantly. Many travellers to the Holy Land now stop over in Syria. This tourist trade could be greatly expanded if a concerted attempt were made to advertise the attractions of Syria and to improve the inadequate accommodations available to foreigners.

More and better hotels, good communications and adequate preservation and presentation of historical and cultural monuments are all impor-

14:International Bank S-5 (1954)1955 MD1 Syria MD1

tant elements in a program to attract more tourists. At present Damascus is the only Syrian city with first class hotel accommodations and even here there is an acute shortage. Such cities and towns as Aleppo, Latakia and Palmyra all urgently require good hotels for tourists and other travellers. Construction and operation of hotels should, of course, be left to private enterprise encouraged by the government and assisted by the projected investment bank. There are, however, a number of places of potential importance to the tourist trade where rest houses and restaurants rather than hotels are needed. Such facilities are not likely to be sufficiently profitable, at least in the beginning, to attract private investment. We suggest, therefore, that the government spend approximately £S 500,000 on the erection and operation of rest houses and restaurants at such locations as Ras Shamra (site of ancient city of Ugarit), Saint Simeon (ruins of old city and monastery-church in Djebel es Smaane), Al Rasafa (Christian monuments and Moslem palace), Doura Europos (ancient city), Krak des Chevaliers (crusaders' castle), Tartous and Soueida. As a UNESCO mission has suggested, some of these could probably be constructed inside existing historical buildings, thus leaving the appearance of the site undisturbed and enhancing their appeal to tourists.

The interest of tourists in the historical and archaeological treasures of Syria also provides a definite economic justification for increasing the expenditures of the Directorate General of Antiquities. This government department has jurisdiction over museums, historical monuments and archaeological excavations. It finances its operations in part from its own receipts, but the government has during the last two years contributed, on the average, £S 763,000 to its annual budget of a little over £S 1 million. In 1954 its total planned investment was about £S 450,000, of which £S 280,000 was devoted to museums, £S 120,000 to the reconstruction of monuments and £S 50,000 to excavations. Damascus possesses a notable museum of which the country can well be proud, but about £S 1 million is still required for its completion. The Aleppo museum, which houses many fine treasures, admittedly needs a new building at a cost of £S 1 million, and appropriate regional and local museums would help the visitor to visualize the cultural heritage and archaeological finds of particular localities. Although all of this could not be realized within the 1955-60 period, we suggest that £S 2.4 million be provided to complete the Damascus museum, establish a few local museums in such places as Ras Shamra and Palmyra and at least start the new building in Aleppo.

14:International Bank S-5 (1954) 1955 MD1 Syria MD1

457 Proper maintenance and repair of monuments is perhaps even more urgent, 658 since there is considerable deterioration at present. We accordingly recom- 172 mend that expenditures for this purpose be raised, on the average, approxi- mately 50% over the next six years. A similar increase might be contem- plated for excavation work which, as in the past, will presumably be carried out in cooperation with foreign archaeological missions. All this will require an increase in the subsidies paid to the Directorate of Antiqui- ties out of the government budget to an average annual amount of approxi- mately £S 950,000. The gradual growth in the Directorate's own receipts will probably suffice to cover necessary increases in administrative outlays.

[491] Poor roads now impede access to many interesting historical monu- ments. In addition to the recommendations on the national road network made elsewhere, we believe Syria would be well advised to spend about £S 1.5 million on the improvement of local roads of importance to the tourist trade. The access roads to the Krak des Chevaliers and Saint Simeon should have the highest priority.

457 Within the not too distant future the government should contemplate the establishment of a special office charged with the promotion of tourism. The cooperation and financial support of business groups interested in the tourist trade might well be enlisted. It should not only seek to interest the foreign tourist in the attractions of Syria, but also to make the Syrian people and Syrian officials more aware of the importance of the tourist trade and of making the tourist genuinely welcome.

Government Expenditures on Industry

433 654 Although industry is preeminently a field for private enterprise, we have made in this chapter a number of recommendations entailing addi- tional government expenditures. For the period 1955-60 these would total about £S 20.5 million, allocated as follows (in thousands of Syrian pounds):

	Total	Average annual
Manufacturing		
Investment bank	10,500	1,750
Industrial zones and workshops	1,800	300
Enforcement of labor code[a]	325	54

16: Collart et al G-5 (1953) 1954 MD1 Syria MD1

FOREWORD

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172 The Minister of Education of the Syrian Republic, drawing attention to the importance of the problem of historical remains in Syria, requested Unesco to send a mission of inquiry to prepare a detailed report on: (a) the general situation and importance of ancient buildings and historical and archaeological sites in Syria; (b) general measures which might be taken to preserve these buildings and sites and make best advantage of them; (c) special measures to be taken to preserve and restore buildings and sites considered particularly important or urgently in need of such preservation or restoration.

Syria is one of the countries richest in historical remains, but her very riches in this respect make heavy demands on her resources. The Syrian Government, well aware of its cultural responsibilities, shows an enlightened interest in its country's past by freely allocating the large sums needed yearly for the upkeep and enhancement of its monuments. In addition to making this financial contribution, the government also shows its interest by extending a generous welcome to expeditions of foreign scholars who wish to carry out excavations in Syria; international co-operation is thus being established and maintained, with good results, on archaeological excavation sites. The Directorate of Antiquities believes that such co-operation might well be extended to the restoration of monuments which, for their artistic value and historical importance, may be considered as belonging to all mankind. It hopes that the results of the first inquiry organized by Unesco may lead to more definite collaboration in this field. This report, marking the first step in this direction, may suggest where such collaboration is called for.

121 In conformity with our instructions, we have endeavoured to describe both the general situation as regards historical monuments and archaeological sites in Syria, and the state of individual sites and monuments. We have tried to indicate the difficulties that must be overcome in order to ensure their preservation, and to suggest certain measures which might help to expand the work alresdy begun with such good results

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16: Collart et al G-5 (1953) 1954 MD1 Syria MD1

GENERAL

SYRIA AND HER HISTORICAL MONUMENTS

488 175 By geographical position Syria is a corridor and a meeting-place. From east to west and north to south, it is traversed by two natural highways, one winding through the valleys of the Euphrates and Orontes to link the East with the Mediterranean world, and the other carrying the northern peoples southwards to Africa. Through the ages the country has been occupied for short or long periods by Mesopotamians, Egyptians, Hittites, Assyrians, Persians, Greeks, Romans, Arabs, Crusaders and Ottomans. In Syria—at Kadesh and the Yarmuk—some of the great clashes in history have taken place. Today, with her fate in her own hands, Syria's past provides the varied and fertile sources of her culture, and her present, the vigour necessary for the remarkable progress she is now making.

● 172 Syria's wealth of historical remains is the visible embodiment of her age-long history and, from that point of view, is to be considered as a national heritage. It has a lesson to give the present generation, for such tangible evidence of their country's greatness in the past is a challenge to the young to prove themselves worthy heirs. For that reason alone, these buildings and monuments deserve to be preserved and maintained. Very often, however, they also have an aesthetic or cultural value, being of importance as works of art or bearing witness to the greatest periods of a civilization. As such, they are of importance beyond the national boundaries and their preservation is a matter of concern not only to the country which possesses them, but to all civilized nations.

For Syria, owing to the vast number and diversity of her historical monuments and the particular conditions in which they are situated, their preservation raises complicated problems. The treatment they require varies according to their present state, for only some of them have remained intact and still serve their original purpose, so that their maintenance is a regular, routine matter. Many of them, on the other hand, are used for a different purpose, never contemplated by their builders, for which they have been more or less satisfactorily adapted

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16: Collart et al G-5 (1953) 1954 MD1 Syria MD1

172 and transformed. Some have been abandoned and are falling into ruin, while yet others have sunk underground. Only the first group mentioned are still obviously useful and necessary. The others are exposed to dangers which threaten their fabric and their very survival. This must be fully appreciated if they are to be effectively protected.

All historical buildings were originally erected to meet some specific need, so that any given monument's existence is the result of some particular political, social, religious or military situation. Should that situation end or alter, the building may be abandoned or pulled down, having no further use in the eyes of a people aiming at a different kind of life, in which it has no place. The fate of a monument may also be threatened by clashes of economic interests; a building is an asset which may vary in value over the centuries, and some people consider it from that point of view alone; if they feel that it does not give enough return and costs too much to maintain, they will be tempted to let it fall into disuse or to pull it down. Lastly, a monument may be threatened by urban development; there are the quite legitimate needs of town planning to be considered, and a building may suddenly be found to be an obstacle to the execution of a development plan, solely designed to ease the traffic situation and improve the layout of the town.

In all the above cases, it must be shown that efforts to spare historical monuments are not incompatible with the requirements of modern life, and that the continued existence of an old building, even if it does not serve its original purpose or is disused, is nevertheless justifiable; that such a building is not just a "white elephant" but, skilfully restored and set off to proper advantage, still has a part to play in the life of the city and the country.

172 658 That is the task of the Directorate of Antiquities, which is striving to make Syria's artistic and archaeological treasures ever more widely known. A few words must be said at this point about the very useful work the Directorate is doing in the three-fold field of scientific research, the restoration of monuments, and the organization of museums. We shall later have occasion to quote a number of examples.

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STUDY OF HISTORICAL MONUMENTS

172 658 Syria's wealth of historical remains is enriched each year by the excavation of further treasures.

Since the old exploratory expeditions made by G. Rey, M. de Vogüé, R. Dussaud and others, the excavation of vast numbers of treasures by the two American archaeological expeditions at the beginning of the century, and the more recent aerial surveys carried out by Father Poidebard, a great many sites have been systematically studied and excavated. We shall not attempt to list them here, but shall confine ourselves to drawing attention to the excellent results achieved through Syria's policy of giving scholars from other countries a free hand in this field.

During the past thirty years or so, a great many foreign excavation parties have come to work in Syria. They have unearthed groups of buildings, sometimes covering large areas; discovered ancient cities; and collected much invaluable material. By extending a welcome to them, Syria has not only added to her archaeological and artistic heritage, discovered new facts about her own history and enriched her museums (the exhibition of finds made during 1952 alone shows how numerous and important they may be), but has also inaugurated successful and friendly international collaboration in disinterested research.

Satisfactory regulations governing such collaboration were set forth in Decree No. 89, of 30 June 1947, which provides all the necessary guarantees. At the present time, six archaeological sites in Syria, varying in importance, are being explored by groups of foreign scholars from four different countries: Ras-Shamra (France), Mari (France), Apamea (Belgium), Cyrrhus (France), Resafa (Germany) and Tell es-Salhiyah (Sweden). The Syrian Directorate of Antiquities, for its part, has undertaken excavations at Palmyra, Boera, Jebla and Raqqa. We shall refer again to these various sites in the later chapters of our report.

At the appropriate point, we shall also have to mention the publications, some of them forming impressive collections, in which the results of excavations, as they proceed, have been presented, described, analysed and commented upon. In addition, there are many studies, relating to archaeology, history, the history of art or the history of religions, for which Syrian historical remains have provided essential data; there are also monographs on particular buildings, cities or regions and, lastly, directories and catalogues. We cannot speak too highly of all these interesting and useful works, without which the monuments would be known only to a few people, and which would never have come into being if the Syrian authorities had not made a point of encouraging such research. Through these works historical remains, many of which are important and some of which may in future undergo alterations or even disappear altogether, are now known far and wide; they are part of the material to which all countries can refer in making general studies. All this gives Syria effective and highly creditable publicity.

Among so many excellent publications, we shall, in this context, refer only to periodicals or series of works dealing principally with Syrian archaeology and monuments, such as the review *Syria* and the fine series of volumes in the *Bibliothèque Archéologique et Historique* (hereafter referred to as BAH), published by the French Archaeological Institute in Beirut; the *Bulletin d'Études Orientales* published by the French Institute in Damascus; the *Annales Archéologiques de Syrie* and the various

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publications issued by the Syrian Directorate of Antiquities. Here indeed is proof of the general interest in Syria's archaeological and artistic treasures, suggesting that any effort to safeguard the country's wonderful historical remains will be sympathetically received by the rest of the world.

PRESERVATION AND RESTORATION OF MONUMENTS

The Syrian Directorate of Antiquities devotes a large part of its activities and resources to the consolidation and restoration of monuments. In both Damascus and Aleppo, it has excellent technicians whose whole time is devoted to this work. The steady increase in the Directorate's annual budget, which rose from 625,000 Syrian pounds in 1949 to 1,007,000 Syrian pounds in 1952, is sufficient proof of the interest taken in this work by the country's high authorities.

This is a remarkable effort, to which attention must be drawn at the outset. It has made it possible to carry out an impressive list of restorations in all parts of the country during the last few years. The principal work done in Damascus has been on the Citadel, the gates and towers of the city walls, the Roman arch in the "Street called Straight", the mosaics in the Great Mosque, and a large number of other mosques and madrasahs; at Aleppo, on the Citadel, the city walls and the Matbakh el-Ajami; and at Bosra. Palmyra, Qasr el-Heir es-Charki, Homs, Latakia, St. Simeon-Stylites and the Krak des Chevaliers, on important ancient and medieval monuments.

Needs are such, however, that the responsible services are sometimes faced with very disturbing problems. The vast number of historical remains (in Damascus alone, there are 125 buildings classified as historic monuments), the fact that they are scattered over an enormous stretch of territory, the size of some and, in many cases, the complete failure to maintain them in the past, give rise to many difficulties. Work cannot be started simultaneously on all buildings; the only way is to prepare a long-term programme of work, spread over many years, and to attend to the most urgent cases first.

Other difficulties are due to the legal position. It is obvious that the State cannot bear the whole cost when the buildings to be restored are not its property. In many cases, the owners are too poor to undertake the necessary outlay; in others, the buildings belong to wealthy communities who neglect them quite wittingly because they do not bring in any profit. In the near future, however, the authorities will probably be in a better position to intervene, for we learnt with interest of a Bill, embodying the most up-to-date ideas, which is shortly to be submitted for ratification. One of its provisions (Article 5) is that the Wakfs (religious communities) and municipalities shall set aside a certain proportion of their income for the upkeep of monuments belonging to them, and that private owners may be obliged to bear maintenance costs, either by direct payment, or by means of a mortgage loan; the work, in all cases, is carried out by the Directorate of Antiquities.

There is an interesting clause (Article 8) in Decree No. 89 concerning antiquities, under which municipalities must take account of the position of historical monuments when preparing development plans and submit such plans to the Directorate of Antiquities for approval. It is to be hoped that this clause will be more strictly enforced, so as to prevent, in future, such demolition or mutilation as has been suffered by the

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mausoleum of Safwat al-Molk and the Mosque of Tingiz in Damascus, and the Matbakh el-Ajami and the Khan al-Wazir at Aleppo.

Measures should also be taken to prevent damage being caused to historic monuments through their conversion into dwellings for refugees and poor people, as is at present the case with many madrasahs and mausolea. This would help to ensure that the excellent and, in other respects, extremely efficient work done by the Directorate of Antiquities to safeguard Syria's historic buildings produces its full effect.

MUSEUMS

In Syria, still less than elsewhere, can museums be considered exclusively as galleries for the housing of permanent exhibitions. The finds from the various excavation sites require the attention of highly skilled, and therefore centralized, technical services. On the other hand, in order to avoid the loss of treasures discovered by chance, and to preserve certain excavated objects near the place where they have been discovered, there must be local museums, or at least archaeological depositories in every region—which means decentralization.

The Directorate of Antiquities has endeavoured to meet these contradictory requirements, which, incidentally, must also be taken into account in another connexion. It is a desirable and legitimate aim to have a large, rich national museum in the capital, but it is also necessary to interest other towns in the country in artistic and archaeological problems by helping them to develop their own museums.

The National Museum in Damascus has the somewhat rare advantage of having been built specially for the housing and exhibition of its treasures. In Europe, we are so accustomed to seeing old palaces, not intended for the purpose, converted into museums, that we are inevitably struck with wondering admiration at the setting and atmosphere which the Syrian authorities have managed to create for the reconstruction and presentation of three great structures of different periods and dissimilar character: the hypogeum of Yarhai from Palmyra, with its rich decorative sculpture; the synagogue of Dura-Europos, with its miraculously preserved frescoes; the Omayyad palace of Qasr el-Heir el-Gharbi, with its frescoes and extraordinary variety of stucco decoration in open-work panels and towers. The museum's other ancient and medieval galleries, although less spectacular in arrangement, contain many objects of rare quality and exceptional interest, such as an Aramaean stele from Sfire, a silvered bronze helmet from Homs, frescoes from Dura, white sculptures from Palmyra and black basalt sculptures from the Hauran, mosaics from Chahba, a carved wooden cenotaph from Tojanus, jewellery, intaglios, bronzes and pottery of various periods. Space is already inadequate and a new building, where the collections of Moslem art will be installed, is now nearing completion. When this building is in use, all departments will be less crowded and it will be possible to reserve some space for temporary exhibitions.

All finds earlier than the time of Alexander are, in principle, collected in the Aleppo Museum, which thus has a character and individuality of its own. Upon entering the museum, the visitor is immediately confronted by colossal basalt statues, lions and bulls, and huge bas-reliefs representing hunting and battle scenes; these are Hittite and Assyrian treasures from Tell

Halaf, Tell Ahmar and Arslan Tash. The wonderful statues from Mari are more nearly life-size. There are also a great many objects from Ras-Shamra (Ugarit) and Mari which well repay examination. The present building is old and ill-fitted for use as a museum as regards both lighting and the size of the rooms. There are plans, however, for the building of a new museum where there will be ample room and the necessary facilities to display the collections to full advantage.

At the present time, there are local museums at Suedia and Palmyra. The former contains an interesting collection of basalt sculpture and mosaics; the latter is scarcely more than a depository crowded with statues and stone inscriptions. The Directorate of Antiquities intends to establish other small museums at Deir-es-Zor, Homs, Hama, and Tartus or Latakia. It is hoped to provide them with a library, where the principal publications relating to the region covered, together with a few general historical and archaeological works, would be available. The existing library at Damascus is extremely useful, but the one at Aleppo would be improved by the acquisition of some additional works.

In conclusion, the following list gives the titles of a few works relating to the collections referred to above:

ABDUL-HAK, S., "L'exposition au musée de Damas des découvertes archéologiques de l'année 1952", *Museum*, vol. VII, 1954 (not yet published).

ABDUL-HAK, S. and A., *Catalogue illustré du département des antiquités gréco-romaines au musée de Damas*, Damascus, 1951.

ECOCHARD, M., "Le nouveau musée de Damas", *Museum*, vol. 33-36, 1946, p. 107-44.

PEARSON, H. F., *A guide to the synagogue of Dura-Europos*, Beirut, 1939.

PLOIX DE ROYROU, G., *Le musée national d'Alep*, Aleppo, 1932.

SAOUAF, S., *Alep, guide du visiteur*, Aleppo, 1951, p. 26-33.

MEANS OF PUBLICIZING MONUMENTS AND PRESENTING THEM TO BEST ADVANTAGE

The efforts made by the Syrian Directorate of Antiquities to promote the study and preservation of historical monuments might yield even better results if they were more widely understood and supported. By means of intelligent propaganda through the three channels of education, tourist development and town planning, it should be possible gradually to arouse general sympathy and interest. The important point is to show clearly that historic monuments are not merely an outdated and costly burden, but have a positive and lively interest for every individual. A publicity campaign on these lines has already been successfully undertaken, but in certain respects it might be amplified and developed.

In the field of education, interest in the country's artistic assets can be aroused by the distribution of illustrated publications and the organization of exhibitions and lectures. There are already some publications of this kind dealing with Damascus, Palmyra, Bosra and Aleppo and more could easily be produced; they should contain fine photographs and be translated into several languages. After organizing a few exhibitions of paintings and a brilliant ceremony to mark the opening of the Qasr el-Heir galleries in the Damascus Museum, the Directorate of Antiquities has recently made a conclusive experiment in this field. It has organized a wonderful exhibition of treasures discovered at archaeological sites in Syria during 1952, which has met with well-deserved success. We ourselves

have seen the constant stream of visitors, often quite humble people, gazing at the showcases of exhibits from Mari, Ras-Shamra and Hagga; while they are there, these visitors also go round the museum and have an opportunity of admiring its treasures. In addition, it would be very helpful if the government, which furthers the training of scientific specialists by providing fellowships for study abroad, and does so much to develop the schools, were to introduce courses on the history of Syrian art and antiquities into the curricula of Syrian secondary schools and higher educational establishments, both in Damascus and Aleppo.

Tourist development could also do much to help in the protection of historic monuments by showing the population that they can provide a steady source of income. From this point of view, Syria's art treasures have, as yet, scarcely been exploited. In the absence of suitable facilities and adequate publicity, there is still very little tourist traffic in Syria. A great deal of extremely useful work could be done in this field by an active organization, supported by the State. In order to attract foreigners to a country so rich both in natural beauties and impressive remains, it should only be necessary to improve certain sections of roads and establish one or two conveniently situated and unpretentious but well-run hotels or rest-houses, where visitors can eat and sleep in pleasant surroundings. It is astonishing that sites as fascinating as Palmyra, St. Simeon or the Krak des Chevaliers should still be so hard to reach when it would be relatively simple to organize tours either by road or air. In this respect, Greece, where the tourist trade has advanced by leaps and bounds in the space of a few years, and is now making a considerable contribution to the country's economic resources, seems to us to provide a particularly good example of what can be done in this way.

We shall have to consider town planning in greater detail

361 We shall have to consider town planning in greater detail
172 in connexion with Damascus and Aleppo. For the moment, we would merely deplore the fact that the authors of extension and development plans are all too apt to write off ancient monuments as undesirable, instead of considering them as items of the finest and most attractive focus-points around which to replan districts. The preservation and enhancement of these buildings need be no bar to a city's normal development. They merely raise problems which should always be studied in consultation with qualified experts are dual to the Directorate of Antiquities. If the work is done with good taste, it will help not only to interest a few scholars outdoors to learn more of the past, but to develop a love of their monuments in the inhabitants themselves, as they come consciously or unconsciously to appreciate their beauty, and, in a short time, take them as an essential and familiar ornament to their daily life.

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361 broken up by the formation of new districts, often at some dis-
175 tance from the original town centre. In isolated parts and on the slopes of the mountain, whose nature is conducive to prayer and meditation, many convents and madrasahs were erected; although several of these have been destroyed and others are disused and in ruins, about fifty have survived until the present time, while others again have been converted and incorporated in more recent buildings.

361 In the Moslem sector of the old town is the Maristan of
344 Nur ad-Din, "one of the most famous hospitals of the Moslem
● 172 world". It is of great architectural interest, but is unfortunately spoilt by the modern buildings which now surround it. The doorway has a rich and original alveolate decoration, a classical pediment and a beautiful pair of doors. Over the entrance hall is a small ribbed onion dome, surmounted by a sort of truncated conical drum, made up of superimposed alveoles which are visible even from the outside, as in the case of the brick tomb of Zobeide near Baghdad. In the courtyard, with its two beautiful *iwans* (halls), fragments of inscriptions, lattice-work and marble inlay have been preserved.

361 The Nuriya Madrasah, to the south of the Great Mosque,
346 has a similar dome above the mausoleum. Its doorway is
172 distinguished by the pendant keystone motif, also to be seen at the Adiliya Madrasah, a "masterpiece of stereotomy and bonding" planned and constructed in the architectural style and by the methods characteristic of northern Syria. This latter madrasah, a fitting building for the headquarters of the Arab Academy, has been very carefully restored and rearranged. This building, together with the Zahiriya Madrasah (now the National Library), the house of Saladin's father, which was converted by the Sultan Beibars into a memorial college, and the Aziziya Madrasah (Saladin's tomb) form a fine architectural group to the north of the Great Mosque; these buildings are still adorned by a wealth of ancient works of art, inscriptions, mosaics, doors and windows.

The twofold influence of Mesopotamia and northern Syria can be seen in the art of the period of Nur ad-Din and Saladin.

Various mausoles are to be found outside the old town itself and slightly to the north, in the area between the river and the modern thoroughfare called Baghdad Street. That of Zayn ad-Din (Sitt ech-Châm, 1172), is the oldest example of such a building with a sepulchral dome surmounting two drums; the "Sultan Hasan" Mausoleum has a ribbed dome and an interesting decoration of stucco and painting; the Chamiya Madrasah, standing outside the city walls, contains one of the finest examples of plaster moulding in Damascus, beautiful inscriptions and the armatures of the old leaded-glass windows. The Mausoleum of Ibn al-Moqaddam, Emir of Aleppo, is a typical north Syrian structure. Further to the east and of more recent date stands the At-Tawba Mosque, planned and arranged on the same lines as the Omayyad Mosque, and interesting on account of its architecture and decoration (doorway, mihrab, leaded-glass windows, etc.).

The suburb of Salihiyah grew up on the mountain side round a fine group of mausoles, madrasahs and convents, most of which are now abandoned or used for somewhat unsuitable purposes. There, in a picturesque spot on the Nahr Yazid, we find the remains of a colonnaded portico of the oldest convent-madrasah of Salihiyah, together with a whole series of monuments built by eminent persons at the court of Nur ad-Din and Saladin. Most of them are mausoles with brick domes, some ribbed and others double, surmounting two drums decorated with arcading and lobate or twin niches. Many of them contain beautiful carved wooden tombs, old leaded-glass windows and

361 lintels decorated with graceful inscriptions and coats of arms.
346 The Moueffaq Mosque, built in 1202, is decorated in a particularly interesting and original manner; it is the oldest Ayyubid Mosque, and its plan is reminiscent of the Omayyad Mosque.
172 Ancient columns, with their capitals, have been used to form the arcades round the courtyard. The carved wooden lintels (with incised geometrical designs) over the seven doors of the prayer hall are well preserved; two of them are still surmounted by plaster lattice-work. Inside, several windows have beautiful old glass panes.

Also worthy of mention is the Atabekiya Madrasah, built to house the tomb of Princess Turkan-Khatoun, with its fine doorway decorated with alveoles, which today, owing to the concealment of the corner columns by more recent structures, looks as if it were in stone. The arrangement of the alveoles, the bonding of the arch-stones of the arcade and the modelling of the cornices show originality, but are somewhat primitive.

This part of the town subsequently developed and spread very considerably, taking in neighbouring districts such as the Kurd quarter, in Saladin's time, and the Mohadjirine at the end of the nineteenth century. Today, this suburb centres round the Mohiy ad-Din Mosque, built by Sultan Selim in 1518 over the tomb of the famous mystic. This mosque, which also contains the tomb of Abd el-Kader, has a beautiful minaret and very striking faience decorations.

MAMELUKE PERIOD

361 At the beginning of the Mameluke period, Damascus developed
195 and expanded further; its products were highly esteemed and, in order to meet the demands of the time, the city developed its art industries, specializing in luxury articles. Even the Crusades promoted its commercial relations with the Western world; like Aleppo, Damascus traded with southern France, Genoa, Pisa and Venice. Its artistic products, such as silks, bronze ornaments, Damascene blades, enamel-work and glassware were in demand everywhere. As a result of this commercial activity, its souqs spread to the north of the Citadel, in the horse-market area, where the Yelbogha Mosque was built in 1264.

Following the example of the Sultans of Cairo, governors, military leaders and their servants then built a great many madrasahs (schools for the teaching of the Koran) and mausolea. The favourite sites for the latter were along the road to Mecca "so that the founder might benefit from the prayers of passing pilgrims". Thus a new suburb, called the meidan, sprang up along this road, reflecting the special features of the pilgrim traffic and trade. The meidan, about two miles in length, was linked with the city by a new group of souqs (Es-Sinaniyeh) outside the western gate of the wall, between the districts of Chagur and Qsar el-Hajjaj; it absorbed the suburban village of El-Qbeybat ("little domes"), and ended at Bab-Allah (Allah's Gate), whence pilgrims "set out on their journey to the Holy House of God".

361 It would take too long to give a complete list of the Mame-
346 luke monuments existing in these districts; even the directory
172 of the Antiquities Service does not include them all. Very often a minaret, a fountain or a madrasah, although not classified, is of considerable interest, because it adds to the atmosphere of the place, or because it has certain original features, though these are often not very obvious, owing to the conversion of the building for another purpose or to bad restoration.

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361 346 172 Here, we shall mention only a few monuments which are particularly unusual or significant. Such, for example, is the Turba Afridouniya ("Jami el-Ajami"), at the city end of the meidan, a Koranic school and mausoleum commemorating the Persian trader, Afridun, who died in 1348. The composition of its façade, with black and white courses of masonry, is perfect, and all the decorative elements hit in harmoniously with it. There are a great many of the latter (cornices, bull's eye windows, doorway with inlaid work and scallops, stalactite ornamentation, inscriptions, interlocking voussoirs and panels of strapwork), and several of them were subsequently repeated, for purely ornamental purposes, in other buildings.

A little further south, there is a small mausoleum to an unknown person, which is commonly called "Weli Chaybani". Its architecture is sober and its composition good. As in the majority of these monuments, the façade, with its skilful bonding, has a doorway decorated with alveoles. The two windows are connected by a single lintel, composed of three rows of stones, the middle one being formed of interlocking voussoirs; there is a bull's eye above the pilaster separating them. The dome, resting on a high drum with 16 windows, is pierced with holes to let in light.

Nearly half-way along the meidan stands the double mausoleum of Araq, belonging to the same period (1349). The plan of this building is more complicated. Its many-coloured façade has turquoise-blue faience inlay round the doorway, with its ornamentation of stalactites and braid-moulding. Here also, the sloping surfaces are gracefully joined to the vertical by a system of alveoles, and the long fascia of the lintels divides the façade horizontally with its two-coloured arrangement of interlocking voussoirs, repeated right across the building and sloping first one way and then the other. The many radiating voussoirs of the bull's eyes form as it were the rays of a sunburst. The lintels are enriched with geometrical and floral designs, and cyma reversa mouldings give unity to the various parts of the façade.

The architectural and decorative elements used with a very strong sense of balance and harmony in these buildings, were later repeated and multiplied until surfaces became so richly adorned as to give the impression of incoherence and pointlessness, combined with artistic decadence, which is characteristic of the last Mameluke period.

The Yachbak Mausoleum (1377), more ornate, but still well designed and balanced, has domes surmounting sloping roofs composed of alveoles. The central feature of the façade is a doorway decorated with stalactites, and the rosettes of the bull's eyes form a horizontal band, matched, within the embrasure of the doorway, by a panel decorated with marble and faience inlaid work in an interlaced design, surrounding the Mameluke coat of arms.

The same features are to be seen in the Rachidiyé Madrasah, the upper part of whose doorway has recently been cut off to make room for an entirely extraneous small structure; the fine composition of the façade is also partially concealed by modern buildings.

Among the latest buildings of the Mameluke period, the Sabuniya Madrasah, the Sibaiya Madrasah at the western end of the "Street called Straight", and the Al-Muradiya Madrasah deserve mention. Prominently situated, with the curves of their domes and the tall shafts of their beautiful minarets, they add a special and typical note of their own to the street scene.

A few other monuments of the same period are to be found either in the old town or in the districts immediately to the north of it. We have already mentioned the Yelbogha Mosque,

361 designed on the same lines as the Omayyad Mosque; it is re-
346 markable for the beautiful structure of its niches and
172 windows with their alveolate decoration, its magnificent bands of plaster moulding, and its windows, doorways and minaret. This mosque well deserves to be set off to greater advantage.

Tinguiz, the Viceroy of Syria, was responsible for the construction of a fine group of buildings. Only the beautiful minaret and two doorways of the mosque which bears his name still remain after the rebuilding of the An-Nasr Avenue, but the double mausoleum of his w . (Turba Kukbaiya) and, a little further on, the Dar al-Hadis, a school where the traditions of the Prophet were expounded, are still to be seen in the "Street called Straight".

The last monuments of this period are the two beautiful tiered minarets in the Bab Jabiya suq, with their rich decoration, and that of the Al-Moallaq Mosque, with an unbroken line of black stones encircling its niches and rose windows.

OTTOMAN PERIOD

361 The end of the Mamelukе period was marked by a serious eco-
175 nomic crisis, aggravated by disturbances and devastation (Tamerlane), and also by the Portuguese discoveries, which altered the traditional trade routes. With the rise of the Ottoman Empire, which expanded Damascus's economic and political frontiers, the city again began to develop. Under the capitulations, Turkish ports were opened to European merchants. Moreover, since pilgrims set out from Damascus on their journey to Mecca, the city was expected to supply them with the necessary equipment and provisions for their crossing of the desert.

These circumstances led to the building of many khans, with their porticoed courtyards, shops and stables on the ground floor and accommodation for travellers on the floor above. The city was no longer of any strategic or military importance; the ramparts, already useless on account of the town's extension and the formation of suburbs without the walls, were abandoned; the moats filled in and the Citadel fell into ruins. The pasha (governor), with his entourage of Turkish aristocrats, took up his residence and administered business at the seraglio, outside the ramparts, at a place called Qanawat (the canals), near the Roman aqueduct.

361 In the same neighbourhood were erected the two great
346 imperial madrasahs, the Solaymaniya (1554), constructed by the
172 famous Turkish architect, Sinan, who built the Sulaymaniya in Constantinople, and the Salimiya (1566), designed by a Persian architect. With their great buttressed domes, surrounded by a double row of small domes covering the porticoes and rooms, their slender pencil-like minarets tapering to a cone, and the surrounding gardens with their fountains, trees and flowers, they achieve an architectural unity and a highly characteristic atmosphere of their own, in a style native to Constantinople and readily transplanted to Damascus.

The Solaymaniya has a rich variety of architectural and decorative motifs, characteristic of that period and style, such as marble inlaid work and great overlays of faience tiles on the walls and tympana of the doors and windows; keel arches with alternate black and white arch-stones; abundant use of stalactites, niches ornamented with overlapping shell designs, lintels with many-coloured interlocking voussoirs, forming increasingly ornate and complicated patterns. The capitals

16: Collart et al G-5 (1953) 1954 MD1 Syria MD
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361 346 172 consist of clustered tetrahedrons, coloured with blue and red. The astragals of the columns and their tori are of gilt bronze. All the surfaces are composed of alternating courses of different colours.

The same features are to be seen in the buildings put up by the governor, Dervish-Pasha, forming a fine group at the beginning of the Pilgrims' Way, to the west of the old town. The façade of the "Ed-Derwichiyeh" Mosque is composed of alternate black and white courses; the tall polygonal minaret is painted green. The whole building, which is surmounted by a large dome encircled by small cupolas, is architecturally connected with the neighbouring mausoleum by an archway over the road. The arrangement of designs, shapes and colours on the façades shows extraordinary imaginative ingenuity. The poinsed bulbous dome of the mausoleum rests on a drum of irregular shape. At a later date, in the same street, but a little further south, Sinan-Pasha built his mosque among the sugs of Bab Jabiya; it has the same characteristics and features (minaret faced with green faience tiles, large dome, inflected arches, geometrical capitals, etc.); above all, it makes the same spectacular impression in the street surrounding, inevitably catching the eye between the sugs and the Mecca road.

361 342 172 Within the confines of the old town, between the Great Mosque and the "Street called Straight", a number of khans and two new hammams were built at this period.

Dervish-Pasha built the "Khan Al-Harir", which is a curious mixture of Syrian and Turkish architectural styles. It is a fine structure, with porticoes surrounding the courtyard and, on the upper floor, two series of rooms connected by a corridor and covered by a triple row of domes.

The Khan Al-Gumrok, in the same locality, has a covered hall instead of a central courtyard, and six large domes supported on pendentives. The Khan Soleyman-Pasha (1732), following a similar but more complicated plan, has a courtyard covered by two large domes. Here, the composition is conceived on broader lines and the architectural volumes are enormous, while the dual colour scheme is still found, not only in the black and white courses of the walls, but also in the bonding of the voussoirs of the arcades and pendentives. Some years later, Asad-Pasha, who was Vali (governor) of Damascus and led the great pilgrimage for 14 years running, built a new khan, and a house for himself between it and the Great Mosque.

The khan has a façade reminiscent of Venetian Renaissance architecture in composition, while the building technique and the choice of decorative motifs and materials are in the best artistic traditions of northern Syria. Asad-Pasha's residence ("Azem Palace", 1749) has the same features, repeated and multiplied; it follows the traditional plan of all large Syrian dwellings, with its two entirely separate groups of rooms (selamlik [men's quarters] and haremlik [women's quarters]), its courtyards, porticoes, iwans, pools and fountains.

Thus Damascus today, as in the earliest periods of its history, is still assimilating and using artistic and cultural themes, borne along the great traffic routes, to converge upon the oasis between the Anti-Lebanon and the desert.

PRESENTATION OF MONUMENTS

361 172 In studying the growth of Damascus and its various districts, we have tried to bring out the character and functions of certain groups of buildings which, if skilfully restored and arranged,

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172 would not only be more beautiful in themselves, but would add to the interest and attraction of the city as a whole. It must be borne in mind that, in old towns, there is more to safeguard than isolated monuments which can be protected by law: there is a whole architectural system, moulded by time, a crystallisation, as it were, of the people's history, customs and needs.

A monument always has some positive, intrinsic interest as a work of art, but it is of even greater interest if it forms part of a whole group of buildings, which makes its purpose and history clearer and sets off its volumes and form. In the architectural pattern of a city, each individual building is like a piece in a mosaic; however precious each small stone may be, it is the whole composition which gives it meaning and worth.

It is true, of course, that there are also worthless things in the old parts of towns; there are buildings which are parasitic or unhealthy. Like a living creature, an old city is subject to sickness and infirmity. The correction of such shortcomings, however, calls for infinite care and an exact appreciation of what is to be altered or abolished; and in any case, the work must always be done with the caution which modern critical methods of restoration and excavation require. It is impossible to say, *a priori*, what should be done, or to map out new streets, building lines and squares with ruler and compasses. The demolition of an old quarter may reveal buildings, fragments and works of art which will enrich the nation's archaeological heritage or throw light on historical or artistic problems. All this is of importance to a country's cultural and spiritual life. There are plenty of examples of the difficulties to which ancient monuments give rise when town planning schemes come to be carried out, even when the latter have been prepared with the intention of leaving untouched buildings protected by the law. One has only to think of the mosque of Tingiz, of which only the two doorways and the minaret projecting over the street now remain.

We are glad to find that the new districts also have a character and beauty of their own, which is becoming increasingly marked as new buildings, in the light of past experience, are better adapted to the atmosphere, customs and climate of Damascus. Although the new streets are often too open and the architecture of the buildings sometimes either a little too rigid (the reinforced concrete construction being rather too obvious), or too ornate and showy (due to the excessive and unskilful use of decorative motifs), they will blend better with the rest of the town when the trees have grown up to fill in the over-large spaces with greenery and subdue the light.

We must admit, however, that we are somewhat dismayed by the results of the new development scheme and the new layout of building land in the area between the southern side of the Citadel and the "Street called Straight". There, the labyrinth of suqs and narrow winding alleys, with buildings jutting out into them, has gradually been replaced by a chess-board pattern of small rectangular blocks. The historic monuments are lost and stifled among many-storeyed modern buildings. The domes and minaret of the Dervish-Pasha Mosque are dwarfed by the high block of workmen's flats which has sprung up beside it. The same is true of many mausolea and of the Maristan, the famous hospital of Nur ad-Din, one of the most unusual and interesting monuments in Damascus.

It would certainly not be wise to encourage the proposal (which would, moreover, be extremely costly to carry out) that monuments be pulled down and rebuilt some distance away, as has been suggested in order to isolate the Omayyad Mosque.

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16: Collart et al G-5 (1953) 1954 MD1 Syria MD1
DAMASCUS

The suqs with their khans, the hammams, mosques and madrasahs generally form a coherent and harmonious architectural and functional unit, which should be kept intact. The present system of classifying monuments should be extended to cover architectural groups as well as individual buildings. We would repeat that this does not mean thwarting reasonable attempts to improve or develop a district. Our aim is merely to show that the usual criteria, methods and means employed in the technical departments of municipalities, where individual interests and immediate advantages are alone considered, should not be applied to such architectural groups. It should have been possible, for example, to prevent the erection of a conspicuously tasteless modern house, jarring in both colour and design, close to the southern façade of the Zahiriya Madrasah (National Library). The new buildings in Seleymani Street, near the Khan Al-Gumrok are another instance of the sort of thing that should not be allowed. Before putting up new building in old parts of the town, much thought should be given to their appearance and colour, with the twofold aim of improving the present situation and setting off the monuments, which are dignified and beautiful features of the city as a whole, to their best advantage. The criterion of utility cannot be ruthlessly applied to the products of culture and the mind. For that reason our young town planners should give up their attempts to recover money spent on laying out an open square with streets radiating from it or piercing wide streets, by ill-considered exploitation of building land in old parts of the town, where the present houses give very little return or by the demolition of hammams, madrasahs and gardens, which now bring in no revenue at all, in order to free their sites. 361/172

The old centre of the town would gain greatly, both aesthetically and from the practical point of view, if the Citadel were arranged and used for a different purpose. Its interest as a monument is obvious, with its magnificent façades and towers and the beautiful east gate with its alveolate decoration. At the present time, the Citadel buildings are put to poor use as a barracks and prison. Should it be decided to use them for a different purpose, the open spaces within the walls should be used for public gardens and so brought into the life of the city. They might be some of the most beautiful gardens in Damascus, with gateways leading into the streets outside. An enterprising architect, with the help of an expert advisory committee, could well adapt the fine and imposing architecture of the Citadel to meet the needs of some public institution. It might, for example, be used to house a university faculty, with a "Students' Centre", providing accommodation for students and professors not resident in Damascus, a library, studies, lecture-rooms and exhibition halls. The mosque should again be used for prayer. Premises could also be provided for recreation and entertainment, with a cinema, café, restaurant, etc. If the western façade were cleared, there would be a really splendid and imposing view down the wide An-Nasr Avenue. Thus transformed, the Citadel, instead of hindering the town's development as it does today, would once again become a part of public life and, in its new guise, would be a great social asset to the city and the nation.

The Great Omayyad Mosque is the most interesting monument in Damascus, although unfortunately it has been so seriously damaged in the course of its history by destruction, earthquakes and fire that it is now a somewhat confused mixture of unequal artistic and architectural styles. It would be excellent if sufficient funds could be found to complete and extend the work—already happily begun by the Wakfs and the Directorate of Antiquities—of restoring this monument and setting 346/172

16: Collart et al G-5 (1953) 1954 MD1 Syria MD1
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it off to better advantage, so as to enhance its appearance, as its artistic and historical interest, its position as the religious centre of the Syrian capital, deserve.

As it now stands, the older parts (mosaics, columns, stucco work, mihrabs, qubbet, etc.) look lifeless and unattached, as though they were no longer part of the mosque, but rather, in some respects, an encumbrance. The aim of the restoration plan should be to set off this heritage of art and history to the best advantage. The first step must be a careful, critical assessment of the relative value of the different features. Steps must also be taken to make an entity of the buildings and restore their artistic unity. This difficult and complicated task calls for the collaboration of artists and scholars, but the result, if the necessary care is exercised, will be to restore to the city the full splendour of its greatest religious edifice.

We give below for purposes of guidance only a provisional list, based on our first impressions, of the things to be borne in mind when drawing up a plan for restoration and renovation work. The most interesting from the historical point of view are obviously the oldest parts: columns, capitals, cornices, inscriptions, fragments of walls and arcades, etc. These are precious relics of a dead civilization, to be preserved for their documentary and cultural interest. As ruins and fragments, they also have a decorative value, and there can be no justification for restoration which involves their wholesale reconstruction.

All the surviving parts of the original Omayyad building (arcades and capitals, mosaics) are likewise of outstanding historical and archaeological interest; but the question of how to set them off most effectively is here complicated by the fact that they are also component parts of the present building. They are, moreover, of very considerable aesthetic value.

The interior of the prayer-hall, in the central part of the transept, bears traces of the succession of periods, restorations and reconstructions through which it has passed. This is now no longer the centre of interest; it gives rather the impression of a sort of corridor separating the two wings of the naves. The dirty, defaced remains of mosaics on the north wall form dark patches against the white background. A few fine old windows are interspersed with a large number of very ordinary modern ones, with garish coloured glass. The thick marble with which the four central pillars are faced for reinforcement is of no interest. The same aesthetic defects and lack of stylistic unity are to be found on the south wall; the mihrab, with its delicate inlaid work, the Koranic inscriptions in faience, the three finely designed lower windows and the beautiful gilded ceiling, clash with the style of the rest.

We think that the white plaster on the walls, the arcades and the drum of the dome, in this part of the transept, should be removed in order fully to reveal the stone structure beneath. The dressed stone in the naves on either side is already visible. The next stage might be to replace the upper windows, change the colour of the ceiling beams, and instal a new lighting system, dispensing with the lamps at present in use. Syria today has plenty of talented artists and craftsmen; and to give them employment would help to keep alive a glorious tradition, and to encourage crafts which are in danger of being stifled by the advance of mechanization.

The comments made on the sanctuary apply equally to the courtyard, vestibule and doorways. Many unmeaning and uninteresting features, such as the glass-paned doors and modern eaves, the neo-classical marble facings, and the cement slabs forming part of the portico floor, are found side by side with

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361 such artistic treasures as the mosaics, the capitals, the Qubba,
192 the minarets and the doors.

In the west portico, large white patches in the mosaics show how much the restoration work done still leaves to be desired. In the north-east section, as part of the careful work carried out by the Directorate of Antiquities, the spaces between the mosaics have been painted a similar colour, with excellent effect, except that the painted surface looks rather dull beside the brilliant surface of the mosaics. Better results might be obtained by mixing the paint with a little marble powder, which would give a slight variety of tone.

It is of course important in any improvement schemes, to consider the general effect of the whole—a fact appreciated by the technical services, which have made plans for building new roads so as to isolate the Great Mosque. In considering these plans, we must bear in mind that the Great Mosque is not simply a building standing by itself: its history and use create an aura influencing the surrounding atmosphere and architecture; the imposing ruins of ancient temples and churches mausoleis, madrasahs, khans and suqs form a complex with it.

344 To the north there are no less than five highly important
192 monuments. The Adiliya Madrasah (Arab Academy), with its fine doorway and pendant keystone, has been described as "a masterpiece of masonry and bonding". The Zahiriya Madrasah (National Library) opposite, once the house of Saladin's father, was converted into a memorial college by the famous Sultan Beibars. Close by the Great Mosque, the Aziziya Madrasah contains the tomb of Saladin, housed in a mausoleum with the characteristic ribbed dome resting on octagonal and sixteen-sided drums. The recent restoration of this mausoleum has been outstandingly successful, especially as regards the enhancement of the general effect of the surroundings. Opposite the north entrance, the Jaqmaqiya Madrasah and the Turbet Al-Ikhsaiya, stand like propylaea, guiding the eye to the fine vista of the Byzantine colonnade, the doorway and the minaret.

361 The monuments on the other sides of the mosque are inter-
344 esting too, though less obviously so. The artistic interest
192 of some of the khans, suqs and hammams is often apt to pass unnoticed by the casual observer simply because they are still in use, whereas that of the ruins strikes the eye immediately. The architecture of the group of buildings to the south-west of the Great Mosque, however, is extremely good. Passing through the Khan Al-Gumrok with its six large domes supported by pendentives, and the great Khan Al-Harir, with its triple series of small domes surmounting the first storey, we reach first the rich and delightful Azem Palace, a very suitable setting for the folk museum and tourist offices which are to be installed there; and then, after passing the fine façade of the Khan Asad-Pasha, the Midhat-Pasha suq ("Street called
361 Straight"). The development plan includes the widening of this street. If this is done, we hope that due precautions will be taken to avoid the mistakes mentioned above, and that the present character of this street will be preserved, particularly in the western section, where the suqs are still teeming with life and interest. We might at this point stress how very convenient the suqs are, especially in extremes of weather; they protect the crowd of pedestrians from rain and sun, wind and dust alike. They form a dense network, opening out,

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341 doorways and windows and in the rich ornamentation of the ceilings, whilst motifs drawn from Constantinople are preferred in the El-Adliyeh, Khosrawiya, Othmaniya and Ahmediye mosques and madrasahs and in the high minarets with their tapering cone-shaped tops.

This coherent complex of buildings, with its continuous life, enables us to follow the whole course of development in technique and taste, religious ideas and history, and commercial organization. Together with the buildings of Cairo, it provides an essential basis for any study of Moslem architecture.

PRESENTATION OF MONUMENTS

172 The preservation of monuments involves striking a balance between a number of considerations—their purpose, the need to restore them to their original appearance, the practical and commercial ends they serve and the requirements of town planning and modern life. All this raises questions of such complexity as to suggest that, in a town like Aleppo, it would be wise to set up a commission of experts to advise the authorities. Such a commission should include scholars, artists, and representatives of the various bodies concerned, and its task would be to examine the most suitable means of giving the city's architectural treasures a place in its modern life, bringing out their character more clearly and making the most of their beauties.

There is a whole series of monuments which no longer serve any practical end and are accordingly beginning to be counted as archaeological relics. In many cases, the maintenance and restoration they require makes them a heavy financial drain, while their value as a source of income is nil. Nevertheless they ought to be preserved and safeguarded in view of the national, cultural and spiritual values for which they stand. They cannot be classed as things now useless and abandoned to people too poor to pay for modern housing accommodation, or put to some low-yield industrial use. To adopt such criteria would mean renouncing outright all possibility of leaving, in the history of the city and the nation, any permanent memorial of what has been.

Officialdom does not always grasp these requirements; under the constraint of an annual balance sheet it takes the view that the artistic heritage is too rich already, and its preservation and maintenance too difficult and costly. But a monument is like a tree: it has a positive value even if it yields no fruit and if its immediate usefulness is not obvious. When the tree has been reduced to firewood, or the stones of the monument quarried, and its site used for new buildings, then we realize that it was not only a thing of beauty in itself but an irreplaceable element in our daily lives.

Today as in the past—perhaps even more than in the past—local authorities are at great pains, in development works, to enhance a town's beauties. In our view, the best way of effecting this is to take into account the aesthetic possibilities of ancient architecture. On this point we can but repeat what has already been said, in connexion with Damascus, about the beauty of the old quarters, and the narrow peaceful alleys, about the practical and aesthetic significance of the suqs and khans, about the value of the picturesque in the urban scene and hence the desirability of preserving the atmosphere and integrity of a setting which is the slow growth of centuries.

Aleppo in particular has outstanding possibilities for pro-

172 gressive beautification, because the whole of its history is written in its splendid buildings. All that is needed would be to free the old buildings of the mean parasitic structures which cumber them, built against their walls or in empty spaces at a time when the authorities were negligent. It would only be necessary to restore to a seemly state and put to suitable use the numerous major monuments, such as "Sheikh Mohassin", the Nuri Maristan, the Zahiriya Madrasah—without the walls, the "Khanaqah Faratra" and that marvel of architecture, the hospital (maristan) built in 1354 by the Emir Arghun, which are either deserted or used as tenements for the poor.

764 In the cemetery of "Es-Salihin", which has been holy ground
172 for centuries, with a sacred rock traditionally associated with Abraham, there are many tombs dating back to the end of the twelfth century, some used as dwellings, others abandoned and half buried. The variety of their architecture and the beauty of the inscriptions on them make them of great interest, and it would be enough to rail them in, clear them and plant a few trees to convert a waste land into a formal park rich with monuments of the past.

The same is true of the tombs in the cemetery of the Maqamat, to the east of the Kamiliya Madrasah—without the walls; the madrasah too requires no more, by way of treatment, than the unbricking of the sanctuary door.

361 Other noteworthy structures which need clearing of the
172 parasitic buildings that have grown up in and around them are the lovely city gates (Bab Antakiya, Bab an-Nasr, "Bab el-Hadid") and the façades, entrances and courtyards of the Uzdamur, Es-Sabun and Qurd-Beg khans.

A proper layout of the approaches to the ramparts between Bab al-Jinan and Bab Qinnasrin, and the demolition of a few run-down shops, would create one of the finest promenades imaginable, with impressive views of the walls and façades of the Mameluke towers.

In any scheme of reconstruction and beautification, consideration must also be given to fine private houses. At present, the Ghazzaleh House is being put to rather unsuitable use as a school and worse still, is threatened with demolition. In our view, a suitable use could be found for one or other of these lovely seventeenth- and eighteenth-century residences, as also, perhaps, for one of the khans, as a club or hotel providing amenities for tourists. Aleppo would thus offer its guests a combination of creature comforts and an incomparable artistic setting.

THE CITY IMPROVEMENT SCHEME

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In 1931, at the request of the municipality of Aleppo, a French architect, Mr. A. Gutton, of the Institut d'Urbanisme in Paris, submitted plans for improvements and new building in the city, with a report setting out the criteria followed.

In their present form, these plans must be regarded as the bare bones of a scheme to meet the requirements of the modern town and the wishes of its authorities. The real key is in the report, where we find the explanation of the ends sought and the means selected to achieve them. One of its more significant passages is that which points out that, while giving the fullest weight to new human and social requirements, it is essential to grasp "the historical value of each quarter or each particular building and, in terms of that, to decide either on its preservation as it stands or on its improvement and clearing"

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PALMYRA

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361 water, fertile gardens and palm groves, and the contrast between the flat, barren wastes of the desert stretching away to the south and the rocky mountain barrier which rises above it immediately to the north. Secondly, its fame is due to its extraordinary destiny and to the romance of its economic and political history, which made this remote oasis in the heart of the desert one of the great trade centres of ancient times and its rulers, Odainath and Zenobia, the acknowledged masters of the East—first the supporters, then the rivals of Rome and ill-fated pretenders to the dignity of empire. Lastly, its fame is due above all to the incomparable grandeur of its ruins.

361 172 The ruins of Palmyra are striking on account both of their size and of their wonderful state of preservation. From the regular chessboard pattern of the streets, still discernible inside the outer wall of the town, rise rows of columns, sanctuary precincts, porticos and steps of public buildings. Round the city lie the vast burial grounds, with their varying types of burial vaults, tombs in the form of houses, hypogea, and sepulchral towers, all of which, though violated from ancient times onwards, still retain their decorations and inscriptions as well as most of the innumerable sculptures they contained. Whole structures still remain to their full height: large sections of the main colonnade are still upright and the entablature is still supported on the pillars with their consoles; the temple of Baal, surrounded by its courtyard wall and porticos is almost intact; the sepulchral towers in which the dead mount guard along the pass leading to Homs and Damascus stand out square and sombre against the hillside, flanking the route. Crowning the mountain with its tours and redans stands the Arab castle, one of the most striking features of the landscape.

As far as the parts of the buildings which lie below the surface are concerned, excavations have shown how little they have suffered from the ravages of time, a fact accounted for by the excellent condition of the subsoil and the dryness of the climate. The freshness of the paintings inside the tombs provides an illustration. Moreover, as the ancient city is almost everywhere covered by a layer of earth 9 to 12 feet thick, even those monuments which are entirely concealed are preserved to a considerable height. Another reason is that the town rapidly fell into decay after its destruction in 273 and never regained

its former importance; buildings were seldom converted to other uses and, except for a few that later served for military purposes (such as the one now known as Diocletian's camp, or the forecourt of the temple of Baal, which was transformed into an Arab fortress in the twelfth century), the buildings were never intentionally demolished or the materials of which they were made plundered.

Thus Palmyra may be said to present ideal conditions for archaeological research, offering possibilities that will not be exhausted for a long time. After the description of the visible remains given by the German scholars who worked at Palmyra under the direction of Th. Wiegand, after H. Ingholt's systematic exploration of the burial grounds and the penetrating studies of the monuments, cults, institutions and language of the Palmyrians, made by H. Seyrig, R. Amy, D. Schlumberger, J. G. Février, J. Cantineau, J. Starcky and others, the Syrian Directorate of Antiquities worked out an admirable and extensive scheme for uncovering the entire ruins. The clearing of the agora before the war, and that of the theatre, quite recently, have shown what spectacular and instructive results may one day be gained from the scheme. The work is proceeding steadily but the task is immense and there is still plenty of scope for useful and fruitful co-operation.

A few special problems which have already arisen in connexion with the study and exploration of the Palmyra ruins are worth noting here. The monumental arch, the temple of Baal, the great colonnade and innumerable tombs, towers and hypogea required extensive restoration and consolidation. The removal of the decorative sculpture of the Yarhai hypogeum and its reconstruction in the Damascus Museum was a difficult undertaking, successfully accomplished. The bold plan adopted to allow of the uncovering of Baal's sanctuary is also worthy of note. The modern town, whose houses filled the temple precincts, was removed and rebuilt further north, beyond the boundary of the ancient city. Now, after 10 years, the whole population agrees that the step was well justified, for the new village, with its wide airy streets, affords healthier and more convenient living conditions; this may serve as an example. The only remaining inhabited building is the charming house of the Antiquities Service in the south-east corner of the precincts, where visiting archaeologists find a welcome and an atmosphere which they much appreciate.

But Palmyra is not only a city; it is the natural centre of an immense region stretching from the Anti-Lebanon mountains to the Euphrates, a region whose prospects and importance are now beginning to be realized. Along the desert routes which meet and cross within it, and where they reach the river, are other sites, marking wayside centres which existed at various times in history. In such places, quite impressive remains have survived to the present day.

THE TWO QASR EL-HEIR

As D. Schlumberger has pointed out in a recent work, Palmyra was once less isolated than is generally believed. Other inhabited centres within the area prospered beside the metropolis. In the plains there were oases made fertile by large-scale irrigation schemes; in the mountains to the north-west, shepherds' villages, made habitable by the construction of reservoirs which provided adequate water supplies for the summer months. These villages did not survive the fall of Palmyra and the region

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was subsequently completely abandoned. However, the dams and aqueducts built during the Roman period were still useful in later times to the Byzantines and Arabs. They made it possible to build the two great castles to the west and east of Palmyra which bear the same name and now stand ruined in the midst of an expanse of desert. They were formerly surrounded by walled gardens and had been designed to serve both as palaces and fortresses.

Built by the Caliph Hisham in 727, Qasr-el-Heir el-Gharbi was a luxurious residence. A tall Byzantine tower marks the site of the ruins from afar. All that remains of the Arab palace is the lower masonry of the walls, which were of freestone; they were uncovered between 1936 and 1938 by D. Schlumberger. His excavations not only laid bare the plan of the palace, which was a square flanked by towers, surrounding a central courtyard with porticos and a single entrance. They also brought to light innumerable remnants of a stucco and fresco decoration which is the most original and complete example of Omayyad art in Syria.

Qasr el-Heir es-Charki, also built by Hisham in 729 near a still older fortification that is now in a very ruined state, has walls and towers standing almost intact up to their full height. The upper part of those on either side of the entrance is decorated with a design of arches supported on small columns; the others have a simpler decoration of ornamental courses of brick. The main doorway has a semi-circular tympanum with machicolations overhead.

Though similar in layout and belonging to the same period, the two Qasr el-Heir presented different problems for the Antiquities Service. With the former, it was a matter of discovering and preserving the precious and fragile decoration, which was picked up in fragments at the foot of the walls; it took several years of patient and highly skilled work to remove it and piece it together in the Damascus Museum, where it is now one of the principal exhibits. In the case of the latter, it was necessary to underpin the walls and towers whose foundations had been undermined by damp and desert winds; the maintenance and supply of a group of workers on an isolated, waterless site such as this was a difficult matter. The work has been successfully begun and is to be continued shortly.

RESAFA

Resafa is another of Caliph Hisham's castles, laid out in the form of a square with a central courtyard, defensive wall and towers; it was located and excavated in 1932, by the German mission under Mrs. K. Otto-Dorn, among the remains of a great Moslem centre. The Caliph died and was buried there.

Up to that time, Resafa had been known chiefly for the Christian monuments that had been built inside its great walls; they are of great interest in the history of art and architecture in northern Syria from the fifth to the seventh century of our era. The largest and best preserved is the basilica of St. Sergius, the plan of which has recently been reconstituted by J. Kollwitz in the light of his excavation work; the structure is said to date from the second half of the fifth century. The remains of the martyry and a second great basilica are still partially hidden; excavation is revealing the beautiful carvings of the semi-domed apses and the capitals and arches. There are also a few smaller buildings and, outside the walls, a funerary

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chapel. The peculiar nature of the crystalline stone of these buildings gives them a very distinctive stamp.

The rich ornamentation of the northern doorway of the enclosure, with its five arches of different sizes supported on columns is also remarkable; in structure and style it has been compared to certain parts of Diocletian's palace at Split.

The size of the buildings and the extent and isolation of the site make Resafa a difficult place to explore. It is gratifying to know that work has now been resumed and it is to be hoped that it will soon be possible to continue it on a large scale.

THE VALLEY OF THE EUPHRATES

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The Euphrates route must also be considered while we are speaking of the desert routes; it too is marked at intervals by large fortified enclosures, built at different times at points where the tracks fanning out from Palmyra crossed the river. Dura and Raqqa are among the best known of these fortifications.

Dura-Europos (Es-Salihiyeh) is a Seleucid foundation dating from the end of the fourth century B.C. Occupied by he Parthians and later by the Romans, it was at that time closely dependant upon Palmyra. It was captured and destroyed by the Sassanids in A.D. 256. The town is situated on a plateau above the Euphrates flanked by two narrow ravines. Guarding the river crossing, and at the same time a caravan city and river port, it held a position of great strategic and economic importance. It was not until 1921, with the chance discovery of the paintings from the temple of the Palmyrene gods, now in the Damascus Museum, that attention was drawn to the site. Its investigation was begun by F. Cumont and continued by Yale University under the direction of M. J. Rostovtzeff. On he traditional Greek chessboard street plan of the town, a number of buildings were located and excavated, including 11 temples, two small sanctuaries, a Christian church, a synagogue, he market, several baths and numerous houses. The many treasures found included groups of frescoes from the church and synagogue, now reconstructed and preserved at Yale and Damascus respectively.

Although the Greek and Roman town at Raqqa was of some importance in its time, it is the Moslem remains of the new town, Al-Rafiqa, founded in 772 by the Caliph Al-Mansur which have monopolized attention. The Baghdad gate with its brickwork decoration and the twelfth-century mosque with its arches and round minaret are the most striking monuments. Quite recently the Syrian Directorate of Antiquities began a search for the remains of the palaces which, in the ninth century, were a favourite residence of the Abbassid dynasty. The excavations, carried out by Nassib Saliby, brought to ligh in 1952, at a spot about two miles north of the city wall, a large group of buildings containing many rooms and formerly surrounded by gardens. A Kufic inscription bearing the name

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361 of the Caliph Al-Mutasim has been found there, besides frag-
362 ments of stucco work, frescoes, glassware and glazed ceramics. This is but a part of a very large built area which will be systematically explored.

A word must also be said of Mari (Tell Hariri), another town on the river, which, 3,000 years before Dura, occupied a comparable position some 25 miles further south; everyone has heard of the extraordinary treasures found there since 1932 by the French mission under A. Parrot, which include statues, jewellery, mother-of-pearl mosaics and inscribed tablets. These are preserved at Aleppo and the Louvre and the most recent finds are at present on view in the exhibition at the Damascus Museum. Other notable sites are the triangular fortifications of Halibiyeh, the ancient Zenobia, built in Roman times, with its serried chain of towers, to guard the narrow pass running along the Euphrates at the foot of a high basalt cliff, and Meskené, the ancient Emar, with its high brick minaret, at the junction of the route from Antioch and Aleppo with the river valley.

The Mesopotamian method of building with sun-dried brick, which was more or less generally employed, and the extent and isolation of the sites make it questionable whether it would be worth while to undertake costly maintenance and consolidation work. At Mari, Dura and Raqqa the treasures found are of greater interest than the buildings; once the excavations have been completed, plans drawn and photographs taken, the ruins can be left to their fate. It will then be the task of museums and publications to make them live once more.

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THE VALLEY OF THE ORONTES

The study of the coastal region must be extended to the valley of the Orontes which, geographically and historically, forms its eastern limit. A natural channel between the Alawite chain and the limestone plateau, it forms part of the long depression running from south to north behind the Lebanon. Scattered along the course of the Orontes, too, are the strong citadels by which the Arabs sought, successfully, to stem the advance of the Crusaders—Baalbek, Homs, Hama, Caesaria, Kalat-el-Mudik—all interesting and beautiful, in varying degrees.

Two very different sites must be mentioned.

On the vast field of ruins of Apamea, overlooking the marshy plain formed by the river, the scattered fragments of that ancient city's monuments are still to be seen. It is being explored by the Belgian expedition which has been led in turn by P. Mayence and H. Lacoste. The ground is strewn with plinths, entablatures, and the shafts of wreathed columns. The line of the great colonnade and the ground plans of various buildings are still easily recognizable.

The charm of Hama, with its green gardens and high, wailing waterwheels, must not distract us from two interesting monuments, well worthy of close study: the Great Mosque, with its two minarets of different periods, its arcaded courtyard and white domes, still showing signs of what it was at an earlier date, and the Azem Palace, with the graceful arches of its upper courtyard, its ornamented windows, its great domed hall of state (dating from 1778), lavishly although a little too heavily decorated. The atmosphere of the old town is a happy foil to the life on the banks of the river and helps to give Hama great attraction for the visitor.

ANCIENT SITES

However beautiful or famous they may be, the ancient sites of the coastal region need not here be dealt with at length in

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connexion with the particular question with which we are concerned, for their preservation and presentation do not call for any special comments. 172

The excavations at Ras-Shamra are still going forward actively; the site is in the hands of the French mission which, for the last 24 years, has been under the direction of C. Schaeffer. The interest of the ruins is partly due to the sensational finds that have been made there, and only the well-informed visitor to the spot will call to mind the age-old past of Ugarit, the innumerable texts that have been unearthed and are, in some cases, still being deciphered, and the precious objects discovered here, the most recently excavated of which are at present on view in the exhibition at the Damascus Museum.

The great monuments of Amrit and the Cyclopean walls of the island of Ruad, protecting that impregnable refuge from the sea, are still eloquent reminders of the Phoenician mastery of the seas.

Nearer our own time, the great Roman theatre of Jebla, which is being excavated by the Directorate of Antiquities, is emerging as a building of quite spectacular proportions and of very considerable interest for certain of its details (structure of the sloping vaults supporting the tiers, arrangement of the stairs around the orchestra).

Mention must also be made of the great tetrapylon at Latakia, which has just been considerably restored.

CRUSADERS' CASTLES

However, the most striking monuments in the whole region from the coast to the mountainous hinterland are the great buildings raised by the Crusaders. They bear witness to the colossal efforts made by the Western peoples, over two centuries, to gain a foothold on this coast, as do the opposing Arab citadels built on the Orontes in order to hold them in check. Peerless masterpieces of medieval military architecture, they impress us not only by their strong defensive works and the 172 344

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technical skill of their builders, but also by the admirable specimens of Gothic art to be found in them.

The three great castles of Sahyun, Marqab and the Krak are most impressive of all, owing to their superb position, massive proportions and historical importance.

Sahyun (Sigon; Saône of the Crusaders) is situated on a narrow ridge between two deep ravines, on which the Phoenicians and the Byzantines had also once established a foothold. It is a large and rather curious group of buildings, to which Byzantines, Crusaders and Arabs all in turn made their contribution. One of the most striking features is the extraordinary way the rock has been hewn out to isolate the castle, while leaving a slender pillar in the middle of the moat to support the drawbridge. Marqab (Margat of the Crusaders), like an eyrie dominating the coastal road above Baniyas, stands on a steep-sided triangular plateau, protected by its immense double sweep of fortifications. The chapel, with its undivided nave, has two beautiful arched doorways. The Krak des Chevaliers, most famous of all these castles, from its lonely vantage-point among the bare mountains, kept watch on the Homs gap. Its strong defensive works, with the double line of fortifications, round towers, curtains, machicolations, underground passages and great sloping glacis, seeming to continue the slopes outside the fortress, contrast not only with the architecture of the great hall and its portico, with their cross-ribbed vaults, pillared doorways, mullioned windows and carved ornamentation, but also with the austerer architecture of the chapel, with its undivided nave and pointed barrel vault. The surrender of the Knights Hospitallers to Beibars, and the fall of the Krak, in 1271, heralded the collapse of the Crusaders.

The same contrast between the exterior and interior architecture strikes the visitor to the stronghold of Safita (Castel-Blanc), around which modern houses have been built in such a way as to preserve the concentric ground plan of the medieval town. The great square tower, in whose walls there are only a few tiny apertures barely visible to the eye, contains a massive and beautiful church with an undivided nave and pointed barrel vault, and, on the upper storey, a high room with a groined vault, divided into two by a line of pillars. This contrast is also to be found at Tartus where the remains of two beautiful rooms with cross-ribbed vaulting are still to be seen inside the fortress of the Templars; surrounded by enormous ramparts. At some distance, inside the town, the almost completely preserved cathedral of Our Lady of Tortosa, an interesting example of a fortified church, with its austere and very unusual façade, its corner towers, its three vaulted naves and the curious and as yet unexplained structure of one of its pillars, still remains "one of the most beautiful monuments left on this coast by the Crusaders".

PRESENT-DAY PROBLEMS

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The monuments of which we have been speaking call for two observations.

Firstly, it must be emphasized that considerable expenditure is necessary for the upkeep and consolidation of these great groups of buildings, certain parts of which are in constant danger of collapse. The Directorate of Antiquities is doing valiant work, but its resources are limited and it is unable to take action everywhere at the same time. It first turned its attention to the urgent repairs needed by the Krak des Cheva-

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liers, which, since its restoration in 1936 (involving the removal of the village built within the ramparts and the repairing of the terraces) had suffered considerable damage. The new work of restoration included the rebuilding of walls, the repairing of vaults, the reconstruction of a stairway that had collapsed, and the replacing of the missing parts of the windows and doorways in the portico of the great hall. But other misfortunes are continually occurring: a tower is struck by lightning; plants grow upon the glacis. It is constantly necessary to set to again—and the castle concerned is only one of many.

We are well aware of the great interest which the Directorate of Antiquities is taking in this matter and of its determination to continue its efforts; it is deserving of the highest praise. It would be well, however, if the skilled technicians in charge of the work could have the advice of competent specialists whenever some delicate piece of architecture is in need of repair. The same applies to the present restoration of the minaret of the Great Mosque at Aleppo.

We are also of the opinion—and this is our second observation—that this work would be easier and less burdensome if the tourist attraction of these magnificent buildings were taken into account. At present they are almost inaccessible, as is shown by the ridiculously small number of visitors (the average is less than 120 a month at the Krak). The Krak or Marqab can be reached only by jeep and it is impossible to travel the whole distance to Sahyun by road. Nevertheless, there were once tracks leading to these castles and they simply need a few miles of repair and regular upkeep thereafter. If that were done, there is no doubt that there would be a tremendous increase in the number of tourists, and considerable funds for the work of restoration could be derived from admission fees.

From this point of view, the region offers real advantages which it would not be difficult to exploit. It is quite near the sea and, if the road were better, a visit to the Krak could be included in the programme of the numerous cruises calling along this coast, which already visit Baalbek and Damascus. The establishment of a suitable hotel at Tartus would make it possible for travellers with the necessary time at their disposal to make interesting excursions to Ruad, Safita and Marqab, just as they can from Latakia to Jebla, Ras-Shamra and Sahyun. This would also be a good opportunity of restoring the church at Tartus, which is at present being used by the municipality as a storehouse. Moreover, if a rest-house were fitted up inside the Krak it would be easier to visit the castle from Tartus, Tripoli, Homs, Hama or even Damascus.

This would permit the successful development of a region whose natural beauties vie in attraction with its incomparable monuments, to the advantage not only of the local population but of the country as a whole.

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THE LAND OF COUNTLESS RUINS

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Few regions can rival northern Syria in the number of interesting ruins to be found within a small space. The Marquis de Vogüé, travelling there in 1861, brought back the amazing tale of his discoveries, but the sites of which he told were only a small fraction of the archaeological treasures of this area, and the two American expeditions to Syria that resumed the exploration of the region more systematically and thoroughly 40 years later by no means discovered all the sites. No complete list has even yet been drawn up. There are probably hundreds.

The great period of development in this region, to which the profusion of ruins bears witness, lay between the first and the seventh centuries A.D. Beginning with the organization and pacification of the Roman province of Syria, it came to an end with the Arab conquest.

Among all the valuable material thus discovered, attention was first concentrated on the churches. Numerous works have brought out the important part played by Syria in the development of early Christian architecture, the exceptional interest of certain basilicas, and their historial, artistic and religious significance. But it is arbitrary to dissociate them from the other monuments around them. Today, with a wider knowledge of these sites, we realize that the various types of buildings, civil as well as religious, must be considered as a whole. A church is seldom isolated; it is only one feature in an architectural complex—village or monastery—each part of which is a source of information about the various aspects of life in northern Syria during the first centuries of the Christian era.

Only a close study of social and economic conditions, in relation to geography and history, will enable us to understand these monuments and appreciate the stupendous architectural development which they represent. Such a study has just been completed, and it is thanks to the kindness of the author, Mr. G. Tchalenko, and of Mr. H. Seyrig, that we have been able to refer to the book prior to its publication (it is now in the press). It throws much light on the sites we saw during our visit to northern Syria.

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N THE NORTH

CHARACTERISTICS OF CERTAIN SITES

The region of the limestone plateau, which is bounded on the west by the cleft formed by the valleys of the Orontes and the Afrin, includes a few fertile plains, but taken as a whole, it is simply a vast mountainous tract of bare rock, fissured and worn. The sites are scattered on the ridges and slopes and only by building water-tanks was it possible for the people to maintain life. They can be divided into three groups: to the north, the Jebel Seman; in the centre, the Jebel Barisha and the Jebel el-Ala; to the south, the Jebel Zawiyé or the Jebel Riha. In certain places there are so many ancient centres that their ruins can be seen on all sides.

These towns frequently grew up around a monastery. The monastic life was widely practised in Syria at an early date and huge groups of buildings were put up to meet religious needs. Every convent was also a centre of agricultural work requiring additional buildings, as at Breig and Deir Turmanin. Some were also places of pilgrimage, where inns, bazaars and hostelries were built for the pious who flocked thither, as they did, for instance, to the convents of Qalaat Seman and Deir Semaa, hallowed by the memory of the famous Stylite.

In other cases farms, a church and oil presses, sometimes covering a large area, grew up around an agricultural town; Banuqqa Qirqbize and Behyo are excellent examples. Elsewhere, there were villages with subsocial houses, as at Réfadé and Kafer Nabo, or with more modest dwellings, as at Qutura and Taqlé. Everywhere, the remains of churches can be distinguished amidst the debris of ruined buildings. In the vicinity, the variety of monuments to the dead is no less worthy of note.

Two sites are remarkable for their exceptional size and the variety of buildings found there: Brad, in the north, and El-Bara, in the south. Situated on the denuded plateau which forms the northern part of the Jebel Seman, Brad looks like a small town; in fact, it was the administrative and commercial centre of a very large region; it grew up around the nucleus of an ancient settlement (interesting remains of third-century baths and two large churches dating from 399-401 and 561, respectively) to reach its greatest size in the seventh century. El-Bara,

361 the main centre of the Jebel Zawiyé, was both an agricultural
172 and an industrial town (large-scale production of oil and wine), and finally covered an area about 2 miles long by 1 ½ wide. Among the confused heaps of its ruins, the remains of several churches and rich mausolea of the sixth century, with their pyramidal crowns, are recognizable.

172 G. Tchalenko has drawn attention to the similarity of the
341 architecture throughout the limestone plateau due to the use of the same materials and the same methods of hewing and bonding stone. He has also noted the unity and homogeneity of the carved ornamentation, which was gradually adapted to the new forms of the various buildings. This suggests that itinerant groups of craftsmen went from place to place, taking their style and methods with them.

172 Evidence is provided by ~~countless buildings~~, varying in
346 nature and importance. We would draw particular attention to two of them, which seem to surpass all the others by their quality and exceptional charm. The first is the cruciform basilica of St. Simeon (Qalaat Semaan) built in the third quarter of the fifth century around the column on which the Stylite spent the last 37 years of his life and which, long after his death, was still a famous place of pilgrimage. The originality of the plan, the masterly structure of the central octagon, with its great semi-circular arches, the harmonious proportions of the chevet and the southern façade, together with the neighbouring baptistery and conventual buildings, make this peerless architectural group "the greatest and grandest Christian ruin in the East". The second of these monuments, lesser known because it is difficult of access, is the basilica of Qalblouz, standing in a temenos, like an ancient temple, on the crest of the Jebel el-Ala. It dates from the end of the fifth century. Its façade flanked by towers, its chevet adorned with columns, the great arches separating the nave from the side aisles, the majestic proportions of the apse, and the quality and sober arrangement of carving, produce that impression of harmony and perfection that only a masterpiece can achieve.

THE POPULATION OF THE LIMESTONE PLATEAU

361 The profusion of ruins over such a large area, not only in the
172 vicinity of fertile plains, but on rocky and waterless plateaux shows that there was once a large population, which later disappeared completely. The construction of water tanks may have helped the people to subsist, but that alone cannot explain their extraordinary prosperity. What, then, were their means of livelihood?

Some have thought the answer to this question to be that the arable land disappeared as a result of complete and unchecked deforestation, which brought about a radical change in the conditions of life. Tchalenko does not agree; in the work already referred to, he gives a simpler and more plausible explanation of this phenomenon.

It has long been established that the ancient inhabitants of the limestone plateau owed their prosperity to the cultivation of the olive and, to a lesser degree, of the vine. The many presses found in all the settlements are proof of this. The cultivation of these crops is perfectly feasible in the soil and climate of the present day. It was a change in political and social circumstances which brought about the decline in the population. Where the soil accumulated in rocky basins and

361 dabs is headlakes to give a village food by the cultivation of cereals, it may be enough to make that village prosperous by the growing of trees. The cultivation of the olive or the only crop however, implies firstly that capital must be immobilized for a long time, while the trees are growing and, secondly that there must be available channels of trade for the produce to be disposed of elsewhere in return for other necessary goods. These conditions presuppose a long period of peace and security. This was once provided by the Pax Romana, and in recent years a stable régime has again been inaugurated. It is already producing its first results: people are again beginning to grow trees and to settle on the limestone plateau.

This is a development fraught with consequences for the future fate of the ancient monuments.

PRESENT-DAY PROBLEMS: THE PRESERVATION OF THE MONUMENTS

192 The fact that the limestone plateau is again becoming populated adds a new difficulty to those already arising out of the nature of the ruins and their wide dispersion. The protection of the monuments was already complicated by the fact that they are scattered over a distance of nearly 90 miles, with bad communications, and by the ease to which they have degenerated—quarries and cemeteries previously impenetrable masses of stone whose buildings, now collapsed, once stood, in the midst of which the churches are generally situated. Now we find, in addition, that the new inhabitants of this region tend, for preference, to settle among the ruins, occupying the ancient buildings, repairing the worst breaks and taking from the fabric of the old monuments the hewn stones they need for building, here lying so conveniently to hand.

It is true that today there is no risk of any great building's being totally destroyed, as happened not so long ago, to the magnificent Tetrastoön church. The most urgent measures have already been taken by the Directorate of Antiquities; certain monuments (particularly those at Qalaat Semaan) have been consolidated; regional inspectors keep an eye on the situation, regularly visiting the ruins and drawing up reports. These measures are producing good results, but they could still be taken further, although it is not to be expected that they will ever provide complete safeguards. In fact, it is impossible to preserve all the monuments, provide a keeper for every site, or counteract the effects of the repopulation of the region, which in itself is a very welcome development. In such a situation, the only practicable policy is to consolidate and restore the most interesting buildings, whose architectural value is obvious, and leave to their fate the countless ruins which consist only of parts of walls still standing or the tumble-down masonry of houses now collapsed.

Two comments are thus called for.

Firstly, attention must be drawn to the very great importance of archæological publications and the outstanding services rendered by the scholars who produce them. Detailed descriptions of the ruins, accompanied by plans, photographs and architectural drawings, as well as more general studies relating to the monuments, make it possible to preserve an accurate picture of a state of affairs that is bound to change or come to an end. We have only to compare the present situation with that described in Vogüé's or Butler's publications in order to realize this.

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Secondly, we must emphasize how much the development of tourist traffic would help in the upkeep and presentation of the monuments concerned. It would be comparatively easy to organize special tours starting from Aleppo. The churches of St. Simeon and Qalblouz would be the main attractions but stops could be made on the way in order to give visitors the opportunity of seeing the remains of the Roman road from Antioch to Chalcis, the funerary monuments of Dana and Sermada, the convents of Deir Seman and Brsig, and the villa at Bamuqqa. There are already good roads over a large part of the distance that would thus be covered, and it would simply be necessary to improve the section leading to Qalaat Seman, and to lay out a good path to enable tourists to walk up to Qalblouz from the plain of Self. Attractive rest houses could be fitted up in an old hostelry at Deir Seman, and in the villa at Bamuqqa.

To attract attention in this way to the archaeological treasures of this beautiful region would help in its economic development, and at the same time, provide the Antiquities Service with considerable financial resources, derived from admission fees, for the upkeep and restoration of these magnificent buildings.

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16: Collart et al G-5 (1953) 1954 MD1 Syria MD1

DEAD CITIES IN THE SOUTH

THE HAURAN AND THE JEBEL DRUZE

133 Black is the dominant colour in the basalt country of southern Syria. The eruptive rocks strewn over the soil give the landscape a highly distinctive character; black are the stones, black the buildings, black the sculptures.

The whole region was formerly known as the Hauran, but today this name is applied only to the western portion, as distinct from the eastern part, the Jebel Druze. The same distinction is to be found in the differing aspects of the two portions. To the west, as far as the eye can see, lies an enormous fertile plain which produces abundant crops of wheat and barley. To the east, rises rugged mountainous country. These mountains have the characteristic contours of extinct volcanoes, but although they are fairly high (from 1,300 to 1,700 metres), they do not appear so, for the ground rises gradually and the altitude of the foothills is always over 1,000 metres.

●172 In this part of the country, the building of monuments on a large scale began with the establishment of the Roman Province of Arabia, in A.D. 106, by Trajan's legate, Cornelius Palma, and was encouraged by the Antonines, Septimius Severus and Philip the Arab. It continued during the Christian period, for there were numerous bishoprics from the time of the first councils onwards and many churches and monasteries were then built. After the Islamic conquest (636), only the towns of Bosra and Salkhad remained of any importance, owing to their strategic position; their main buildings (military and religious) date from the twelfth and thirteenth centuries.

The abandonment of the ancient sites, however, rapidly resulted everywhere in the ruin of their monuments. Where there had been most villages, there they were most completely deserted.

SITES AND MONUMENTS IN THE JEBEL DRUZE

361 172 Two of the many sites, Chahba and Qanawat, have fairly large groups of monuments.

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Chahba, formerly Philippopolis, was founded in the third century by the emperor, Philip the Arab, on the square plan of a Roman camp. The gates of the town, the wonderfully preserved pavement of the cardo and the decumanus, a small theatre, thermae and various other monuments are still to be seen on the ancient site, while huge mosaics from it are now preserved at Suwida and Damascus. Qanawat, formerly Kanatha, stands in undulating country, planted with trees, where the still well-preserved ruins make a very striking picture. Among these ruins are to be seen curious tombs, the colonnades (still standing) of several temples and the great group of buildings known as the serapis, an interesting collection of Roman and Christian structures, where it is possible to distinguish the corbelled columns of a prostyle temple, the portico, atrium and hall of a large fourth-century basilica, and the curiously ornamented façade of a church almost as ancient.

At Chahba, as at Qanawat, the inhabitants are now living in the ruins, having installed themselves in certain buildings and damaged others by taking materials from them. The same situation is found at most of the large number of ancient centres in this region, and particularly at Chahba, where the famous basilica, the palace with its interesting façade and a beautiful house adorned with columns are not only distinctive in themselves, but also provide excellent examples of those stone slab roofs supported on corbels which are a characteristic feature of the local architecture. At Suwida, the busy centre of the Jebel Druse, there is practically nothing left of the ancient monuments. Even a great group of buildings like the temple of Sia has now completely disappeared. Moreover, we have only to compare the present state of the monuments with that described in the publications issued at the beginning of the century to realize how much destruction has taken place during the last 50 years.

We must hasten to add, however, that the necessary measures have been taken to prevent further damage. The Directorate of Antiquities has put in hand the most urgent consolidation work; inspectors keep an eye on the monuments and report any new discoveries, while the museum at Suwida prevents the dispersion and disappearance of the objects found. Nevertheless, the great numbers of ancient remains and the fact

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that they are widely scattered and often difficult of access, make it hard to ensure really effective protection. 361 172

THE CHURCHES OF EZRAA

At least a brief mention must be made of the importance of Ezraa. The churches of St. George and St. Hélie, dating from 514 and 542 respectively, are important in the history of early Christian art. Today, they are in a deplorable state of neglect. The cupola of the church of St. George collapsed in 1912. Ugly repairs have been made to both. The consolidation and intelligent restoration of both these buildings is particularly to be recommended. 346

BOSRA

The old capital of the Roman Province of Arabia is now a humble village. It contains remarkable ancient ruins, both Christian and Islamic, whose architectural beauty and historical importance recall the city's long and brilliant past. 361 172

The topography of the Roman town is still clearly indicated by the straight course of the main thoroughfare, built on the ancient decumanus; several columns of its porticos and one of the gates at the western end of the town are still standing. The visitor will note a great monumental arch with three bays, the ruins of thermae and four large Corinthian columns which may have formed part of a nymphaeum.

Built in 513 under the Archbishop Julianos, the cathedral, now in a very ruinous state, is one of the oldest examples of a large church with a cupola and central plan. From an inscription, we know that Bosra possessed an even older church, dedicated to the Virgin in the third quarter of the fourth century by the Archbishop Antipater; this inscription reminds us of the important part played by the town in early Christian history. Its name is also linked with the early history of Islam, for a large building with an apse and a blind façade is believed to be the remains of the monastery where the monk Bahira taught Mahomet and foretold his prophetic calling. A mosque, Al-Mabrak, was later built on the spot where, according to tradition, the Prophet's camel knelt. 346 172

This is one of the many mosques whose high dark minarets, square-built in the twelfth century, give the town of Bosra its own particular stamp. Although the Great Mosque of Omar is in a better state of preservation and although the minaret of Al-Fasmé has a sleaderer grace, the Al-Mabrak mosque and the adjoining madrasah, built in 1136—the oldest Syrian madrasah, according to J. Sauvaget—form a very remarkable architectural group.

The rapid decay of these monuments is most regrettable. A glance at the older publications will show the extent of the damage, which has been made worse by the building of modern

houses among the ancient buildings. These houses should be removed and the monuments should be consolidated and restored. It is not at all certain that the plan adopted by the authorities for the improvement of this site meets all these needs or gives sufficient attention to the appropriate preservation of the principal monuments.

In conclusion, we must draw attention to the quite outstanding interest of the group formed by the Roman theatre and the Arab citadel. The two buildings, equal in beauty, are intimately connected. The thirteenth-century ramparts, with their great square towers and rustic work, encircle the caves of the theatre, while a building intended as a storehouse, consisting of three storeys of great vaulted rooms, one above the other, has been built on the orchestra. The Directorate of Antiquities has recently carried out large-scale excavation work to clear the tiered seats and the stage as far as possible. We feel that bolder action is necessary and that the huge block of masonry obstructing the interior of the caves, which is of no great interest in itself, should be demolished. This would restore a splendid ancient monument in its entirety, without serious detriment to the Moslem citadel. The Roman theatre at Bosra is one of the largest, most beautiful and most complete of those that still remain. Moreover, it has a number of noteworthy features, in the structure of the sloping arches supporting the tiers, the arrangement of the small stairways leading to the latter, and the wonderful ornamentation of the *frons scenae*. The towers of the Arab citadel are also a magnificent example of mediæval military architecture. If the work we have suggested were done, both buildings, instead of detracting from each other as they do at present, would be seen to greater advantage. Together, they would be an outstanding attraction for tourists.

The region of Bosra and the Jebel Druze, which can be reached quite easily from Damascus, should be much better known. The establishment of a rest-house inside the citadel of Bosra itself and the improvement of accommodation facilities at Soueida would involve little cost and make visits much easier.

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CONCLUSION

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● 172 The foregoing remarks do not necessarily call for any formal conclusion. Our purpose has not been to demonstrate any theory, but simply to describe as accurately and objectively as possible, in accordance with our instructions, the general situation with regard to historic monuments and archaeological sites in Syria and the particular situation of certain of them. We have, so to speak, taken bearings.

Nevertheless, it would be well to emphasize the variety and complexity of the problems confronting Syria in connexion with the protection and presentation of its monuments, as revealed by our observations; these problems vary according to the region, the age and nature of the buildings, their state of preservation and their environment.

In large and rapidly expanding towns, such as Damascus and Aleppo, attention must be drawn to the interest which historical monuments have for the present generation. Their aesthetic value must be taken into consideration in all town-planning schemes, which should endeavour to preserve or create the most appropriate atmosphere around them, befitting their proportions, character and style. Far from hindering the natural development of a city, they should continue to embellish it, being given their rightful place in the scene so as to do full justice to their cultural significance as well as to the needs of modern life. To that end, efforts should also be made to allow historic monuments to serve their original purpose, or to find a suitable new one for them, so that they are not left aside as useless relics of the past but play a real part in the life of the city.

Outside the towns, difficulties are due to the great numbers, extreme diversity and wide dispersion of the monuments and archaeological sites. Hundreds of miles of desert lie between such great groups of ruins as Palmyra or Dura and the inhabited centres of the country. Elsewhere, as in northern Syria and, to a lesser degree, in the Jebel Druze, there are so many ruins that it has scarcely been possible to draw up a complete list of them. In other cases, such as the Crusaders' castles, the buildings are so huge that their upkeep alone would necessitate constant attention and very considerable expenditure. Moreover, the new discoveries made on excavation sites are

172 constantly adding, year by year, to the heritage of historic monuments.

172 658 We have frequently had occasion to compliment the Directorate of Antiquities on the manner in which it is carrying out its manifold tasks by ensuring the preservation and supervision of monuments and archaeological sites, executing a substantial programme of restoration work each year, organizing museums and promoting investigations and learned publications. By its own efforts as well as by those which it has instigated or encouraged, it is achieving remarkable results over a very wide area. Tribute must also be paid to the understanding and generosity of the Syrian Government which is providing the Directorate with the necessary means for its work.

In proportion to its resources, Syria is devoting very substantial sums to its monuments. The importance of the latter warrants this policy, and also explains the interest they are arousing throughout the world, far beyond the boundaries of the country. It also justifies the desire of the Directorate of Antiquities for a better understanding and fuller support of its efforts. We have indicated a few of the means that we consider most apt to assist it in its efforts.

The importance of learned publications must once again be emphasized. The historic monuments described and commented upon therein can be studied by scholars of all countries and become more truly a part of the cultural treasures of mankind, so that, even if they are afterwards lost, the memory of them remains. It is not enough, however, to bring them to the notice of a small circle of experts in this way; interest can be aroused among a wider public by attractive "popular" works, exhibitions and lectures, by the introduction of special courses in schools, and, in other countries, by intelligent publicity calculated to attract tourists to Syria, thus benefiting the country in various ways. We have already indicated how helpful it would be to set up, at Damascus and Aleppo, local committees of artists and scholars to advise the authorities on all questions of town planning. We also feel that international missions of experts, particularly on architectural restoration, could in suitable cases make detailed studies, in co-operation

with the Directorate of Antiquities, of the measures to be taken for the better presentation of certain large and important buildings. 192 658

If the results of our survey help to make the artistic and archaeological treasures of Syria better known and appreciated

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abroad as well as in the country itself, if they can in any way assist the work so well begun by the Directorate of Antiquities to promote the protection and study of historic monuments, and if they suggest new and useful forms of co-operation for that purpose, we shall feel that our work has been well worth while.

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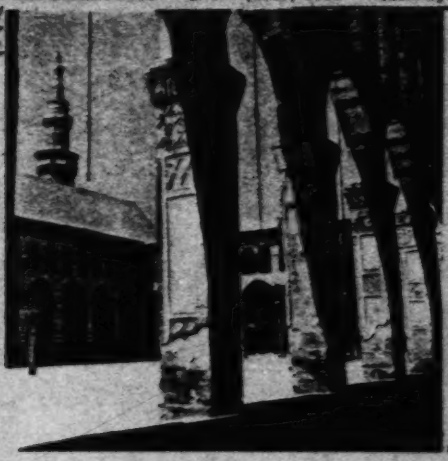

1. Damascus. Great Mosque: South portico.
2. Damascus. Great Mosque: West portico.
3. Damascus. Great Mosque: West portico and minaret.
4. Damascus. Great Mosque: minaret.
5. Damascus. Great Mosque: minaret.

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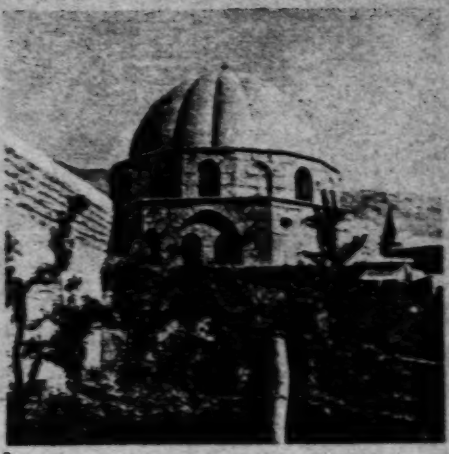

6. Damascus. Cemetery of Bab Saghir.
7. Damascus. Darwish-Pasha Mosque (1573).
8. Damascus. Sulaimiye Madrassah (1566).
9. Damascus. Rukniye Madrassah (1254).

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m. Damascus, Suleymiye Madrasah (1554)
n. Damascus, Sultaniye Madrasah (1708)
o. Damascus, Khan Assad-Pasha (1688, restored)
p. Damascus, Sallahiye Madrasah (1168)

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14. Damascus. Mosque ("Mashhad"; 1200–13); minaret.
15. Damascus. Sheik Mahir ad-Din (1318); minaret.
16. Damascus. Al-Muradiya Mosque; minaret.
17. Damascus. Mosque (1366); minaret.
18. Damascus. Madrasa al-Jaqmaqiya (1479); minaret.
19. Damascus. Isma'iliya (14th century); minaret.

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25. Mopp. El-Omari Mosque.
26. Mopp. Mosque Aqsun.
27. Mopp. Archibald, House.
28. Mopp. Aleppo Exhibition.

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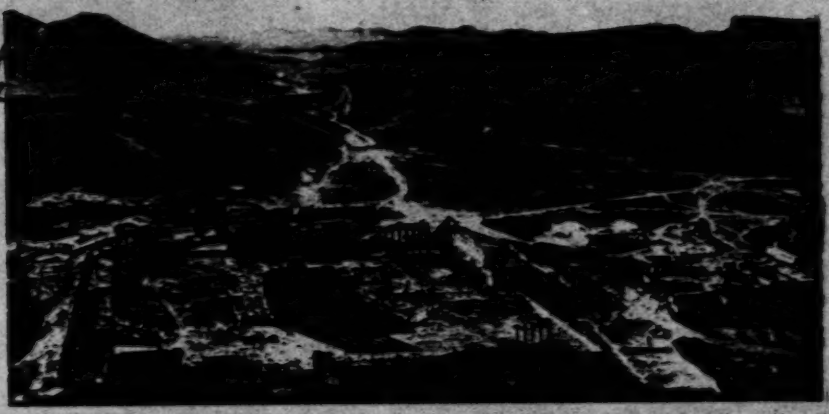

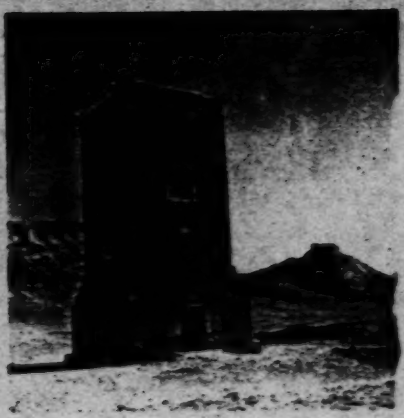

xo. Palmyra. Aerial view.
xk. Palmyra. Colonnade of the courtyard of the Temple of Bel.
xp. Palmyra. Tower of Hatibel.

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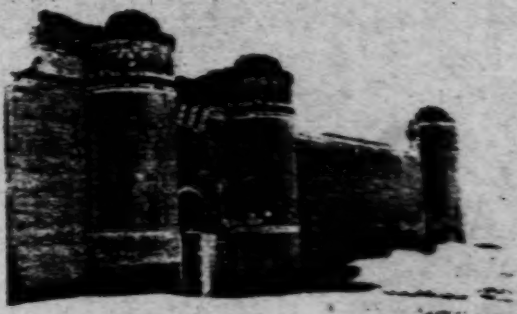

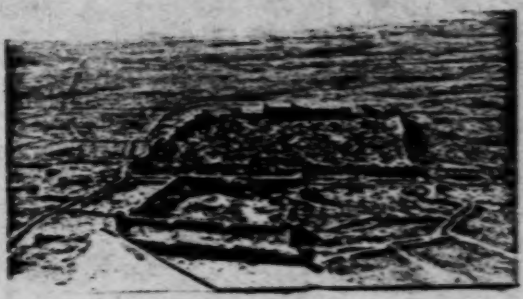

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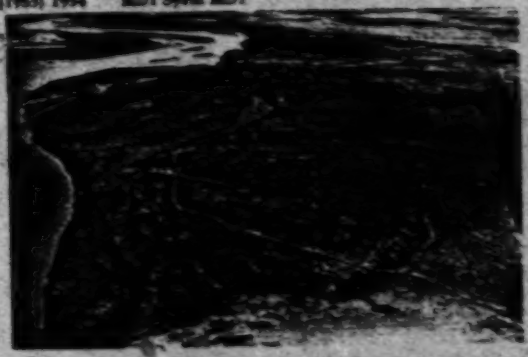

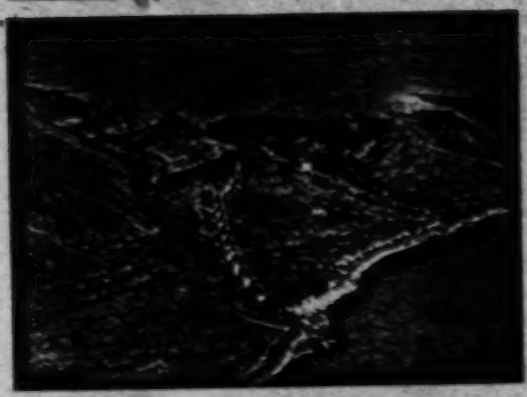

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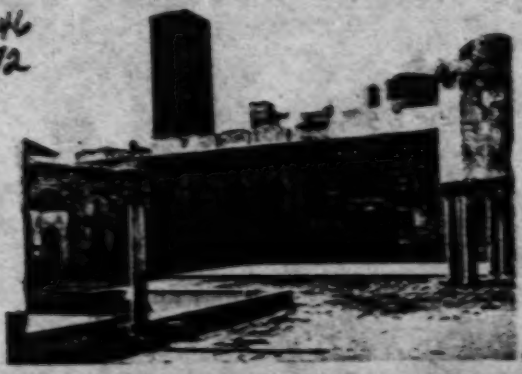

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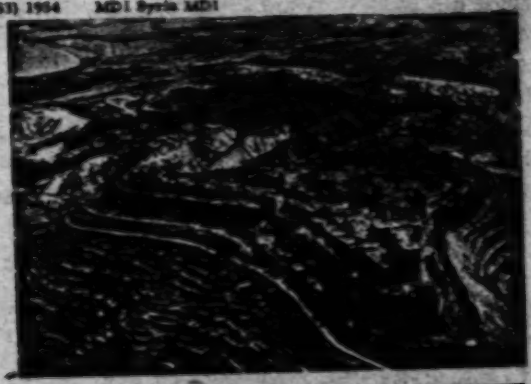

a. Cenle of Triumph. Aerial view.
b. Cenle of Triumph. General view of southwestern.
c. Cenle of Palm. Aerial view.

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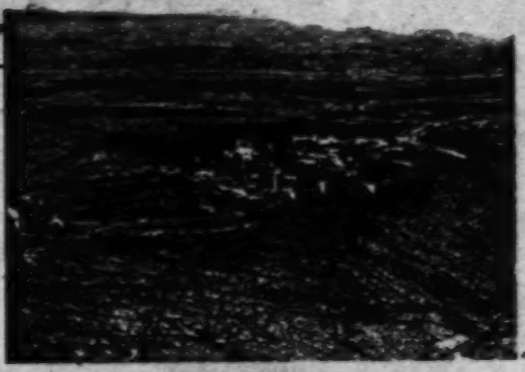

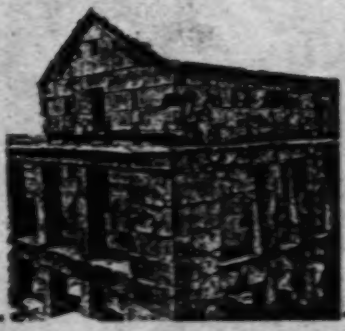

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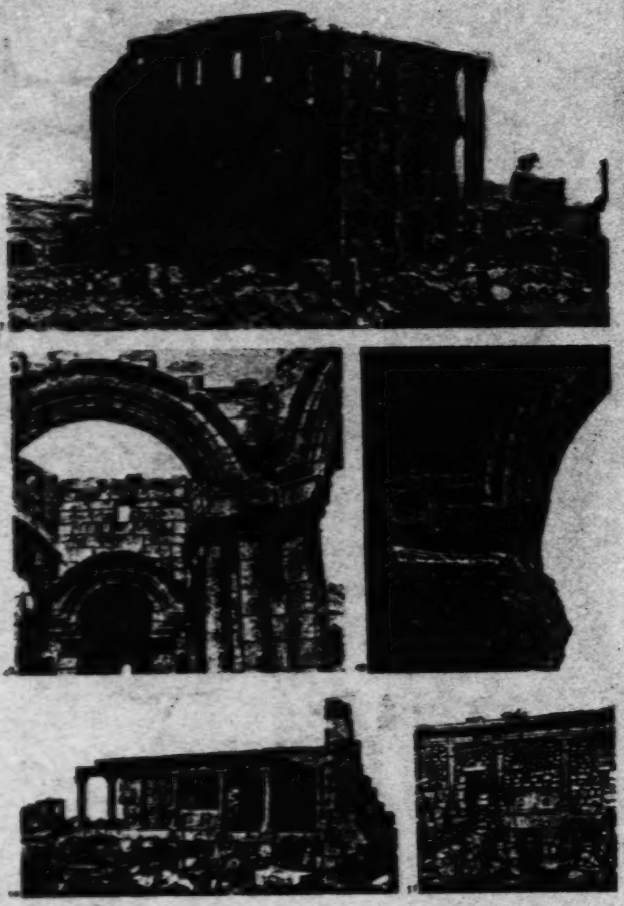

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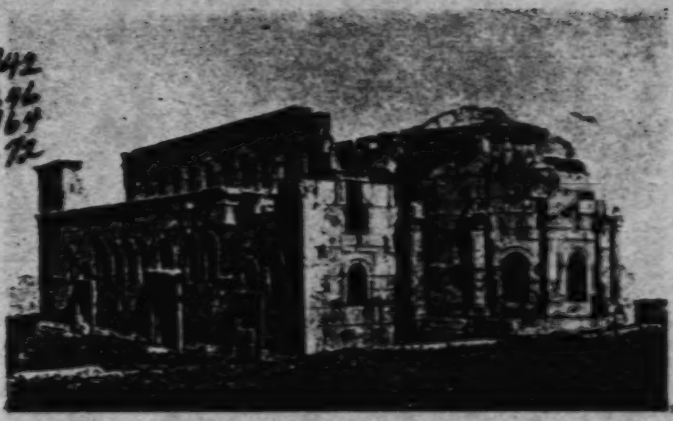

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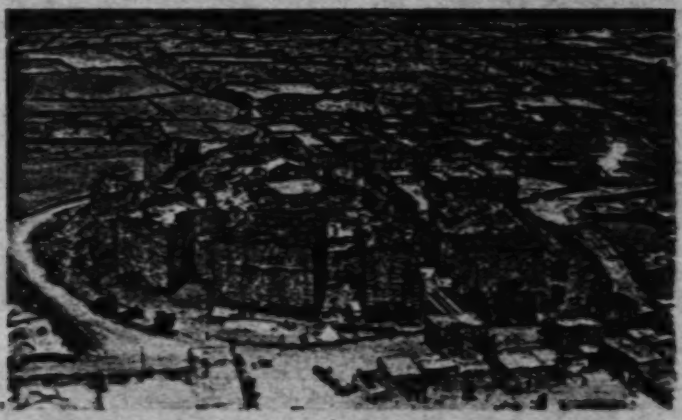

13. Room. Citadel and rooms. Aerial view.
14. Room. Interior of the rooms.
15. Room. Entrance to the Citadel.

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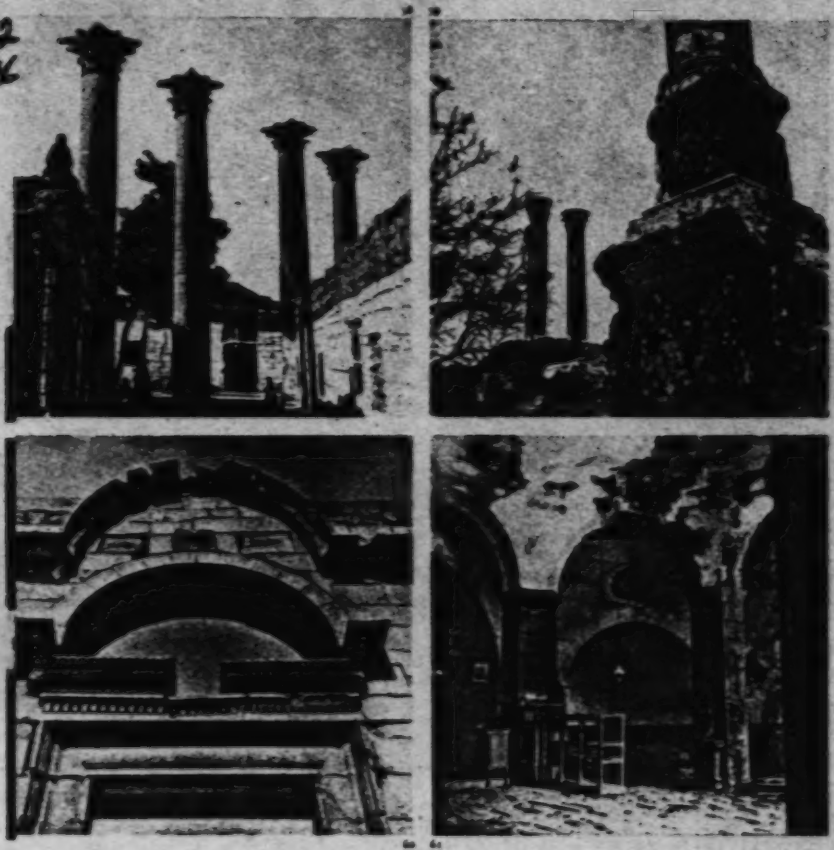

a. Dura. Archer relief.
b. Qasr el Hair. Temple of Palmyra.
c. Qasr el Hair. Court of the Palmyra.
d. Dura. Church of the Cavalry.

following P35 - P